CANADIAN THESES

THÈSES CANADIENNES

MOUSAVIAN, Seyed N.

EMPTY NAMES AND NEO-RUSSELLIANIAM

ISBN 978-0-494-46393-2

NR-46393

1/3

University of Alberta

Empty Names and Neo-Russellianism

by

Seyed N. Mousavian ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Philosophy

Edmonton, Alberta
Fall 2008

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395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-46393-2
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-46393-2

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To my love, to my wife

To Dorna Nejadfard

Abstract

This thesis is a study of the most well-known Neo-Russellian replies to the problems raised by genuinely empty names for Neo-Russellianism. In particular, three different Neo-Russellian views are considered and critically evaluated. I argue that Neo-Russellianism is deeply problematic with regard to the problems raised by genuinely empty names. The conclusion is that either Millianism or the thesis of singular Russellian propositions is false.

The first Neo-Russellian view, developed by David Braun (1993; 2005) and at least partially shared by Jennifer Saul (2007), is introduced and criticized in the first chapter. The second, defended by Nathan Salmon (1987; 1998) and Scott Soames (2002; 2005), is explained and evaluated in the second chapter. And the third, defended by many including Fred Adams et al. (Garry Fuller, Robert Stecker, and Laura Dietrich) (1994; 1997; 2004; 2007) and, in a slightly different form, Kenneth Taylor (2000) is presented and assessed in the third chapter.

I argue that none of these views provides a successful defense of Neo-Russellianism. From this we can conclude that Neo-Russellianism, in its current versions, is not acceptable. Nevertheless, as I argue in the fourth chapter, one may want to reject the existence of empty names in natural language and therefore erase the problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism altogether. I provide three arguments that it cannot be the case; there are always genuinely empty names in natural language. As a hypothetical defense of Neo-Russellianism, one may suggest a radically modified version of Neo-Russellianism: Semi-Meinongian Neo-Russellianism. According to this view, all names of natural language refer. Quite

besides the arguments for the inevitability of genuinely empty names in natural language and problems with Meinongian ontologies, I show that even Semi-Meinongian Neo-Russellianism does not answer important problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism. At least with regard to such problems, Neo-Russellianism is deeply problematic. Furthermore, since the formulation of these problems only requires *atomic simple* sentences containing genuinely empty names, these problems threaten the heart of Neo-Russellianism: Millianism and the thesis of singular Russellian propositions. I conclude that at least one of these theses should be rejected.

Acknowledgments

Better than a thousand days of diligent study is one day with a great teacher, a Japanese proverb reads; I had two great teachers: Professor Bernard Linsky and Professor Adam Morton, my co-supervisors. I am greatly indebted to them not only for their meticulous diligence in discussing, reading and commenting on the previous drafts of this dissertation but also for their extramundane kindness, modesty, and tolerance. They spent countless hours discussing and criticizing my fledging philosophical ideas. I am deeply grateful to Professor Francis Jeffry Pelletier, my advisor, and Professor Reinaldo Elugardo who both read the entire manuscript and made a number of insightful suggestions. I shall express my gratitude to the Department of Philosophy, at University of Alberta, particularly to Professor Bruce Hunter, the chair of the department, for their support, intellectually and financially. I am also thankful to the Iranian Ministry of Science and Iranian Institute of Philosophy providing me the opportunity to do my PhD here. I owe thanks to many great philosophers for replying my questions, talking about my thoughts, or sharing their ideas with me. A list will include: Fred Adams, Joseph Almog, Peter Alward, Anthony Anderson, Ermanno Bencivenga, David Braun, Anthony Everett, Kit Fine, Graeme R. Forbes, Dale Jacquette, Terrence Parsons, Alvin Plantinga, Graham Priest, Mark Sainsbury, Nathan Salmon, Scott Soames, Stephen Yablo, and Edward Zalta.

'Empty names and Neo-Russellianism' would not refer to any PhD dissertation at the time being if Dorna, my love and wife, were not besides me. I owe a great deal to her; not only for her patience and love but also for her assistance and encouragement. I want to thank my parents, Ayatollah Seyed Abdullah Mousavian and Esmat Mostafavi, who always helped me to follow my aspirations. The influence of some noble people is undeniable on my character: the late Dr. Youssef S. Aliabadi, Dr. Seyed Ali A. Mousavian, my uncle, the late Grand Ayatollah Seyed Mohammad Mostafavi, my grandfather, and Dr. Ali Paya. Last but not least, I want to thank my grandmother Seddighe Sedehi, whose name means truth-teller in Persian, who brought me up in the belief that I shall tell the truth even if it disadvantages me.

Success depends on luck; the truth is that I was lucky to have superb philosophy teachers and a caring and loving family.

> Certainly We bestowed wisdom upon Luqman [an ancient sage] saying: Give thanks to God; whoever gives thanks gives thanks for [the good of] her own soul and whoever is ungrateful, God is indeed all-sufficient, all-praiseworthy.
>
> (Quran, 31: 12)

Seyed N. Mousavian
May 2008
Edmonton, Canada

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CHAPTER 0

INTRODUCTION

§0.0. The Problem

Natural language contains various uses of 'empty' singular terms. A singular term is called 'empty' if it does not have a semantic referent. Though there is no consensus about empty names, the following examples may help:

1. Names from fictions (fictional names): 'Sherlock Holmes'
2. Names from mythology (mythical names): 'Pegasus'.
3. Names from false historical narrations: 'Ibn Saba'.
4. Names from superseded scientific theories: 'Vulcan'[1].
5. Names of individuals and particular objects in the past: 'Socrates'.
6. Names of individuals and particular objects in the future: 'Newman'[2].
7. Terms describing mere possibilities: 'the possible fat man in the doorway'.
8. Terms describing impossibilities: 'the round square'.
9. Names for merely possible individuals or particular objects: 'Nothan'[3].
10. Terms for impossible individuals or particular objects: '{Nothan, Nathan}'[4]

The most popular semantics of natural language which is a Neo-Russellian view, however, does not straightforwardly account for empty names. A view is Neo-Russellian if it is committed to at least two theses:[5] Millianism and the thesis of singular Russellian propositions. The former says that the semantic content of a name is the object to which the name refers and the latter says that the semantic content of a sentence containing a name (uttered in a context) is the singular Russellian (structured) proposition expressed by that sentence.[6]

Empty names pose several problems for a Neo-Russellian view. For example, assume that 'Vulcan' is a genuinely empty name. So, by definition, 'Vulcan' does not refer to any thing.[7] Therefore, by Millianism, 'Vulcan' does not have semantic content. Then, consider utterances of the following sentences:

(1) Vulcan exists.

(2) Vulcan does not exist.

If 'Vulcan' does not have semantic content, by the Principle of Compositionality of Semantic Content[8], it follows that (1) and (2) do not have semantic content. Given that the semantic content of a sentence [9] is the proposition semantically expressed by that sentence, then (1) and (2) do not express a proposition. This, however, seems implausible for two reasons. First, (1) and (2) seem to be completely meaningful. But if (1) and (2) lack semantic content, they are not completely meaningful. Second, (1) seems to be false and (2) seems to be true; in other words, if 'Vulcan' does not semantically refer to any thing, we have strong evidence to consider (1) as false and (2) as true. But if (1) and (2) lack semantic content, they do not have any truth value at all, given that propositions are truth value bearers.

§0.1. The Thesis

This thesis is a study of the most well-known Neo-Russellian replies to the problems raised by genuinely empty names for Neo-Russellianism. In particular, three different Neo-Russellian views are considered. The first view, developed by David Braun (1993; 2005) and at least partially shared by Jennifer Saul (2007)[10], is introduced and criticized in the first chapter. Braun argues that all atomic simple[11] sentences containing genuinely empty names semantically express atomic gappy propositions (i.e. singular Russellian propositions that contain one or more gaps). Furthermore, according to Braun's view, all atomic gappy propositions are false. He, then, introduces *propositional guises* as psychological entities under which singular Russellian propositions as well as gappy propositions are similarly entertained. Competent and rational speakers may think that a single proposition is true when they entertain or believe it under a specific propositional guise and may think that it is false when they entertain or believe the very same proposition under a different propositional guise, and the same is said to be true for gappy propositions.

The second Neo-Russellian approach, defended by Nathan Salmon (1987; 1998) and Scott Soames (2002; 2005), is explained and evaluated in the second chapter. In a nutshell, according to this view, the semantic content of an atomic simple sentence containing a genuinely empty name is an atomic gappy proposition but atomic gappy propositions are not truth evaluable. Therefore, such propositions are neither true nor false. Salmon's claim, then, is that most of the sentences usually taken as expressing gappy propositions do not express gappy propositions, rather they either express standard singular Russellian propositions or nonexistent propositions. They express standard singular Russellian propositions if the so called 'empty' names used in them are not really empty and refer to some mythical or fictional objects. They express nonexistent propositions, if the so called 'empty' names used in them are very strongly nonreferring. Both the standard singular Russellian propositions containing mythical or fictional objects and the nonexistent propositions are truth evaluable.

The third Neo-Russellian view, defended by many including Fred Adams, Garry Fuller, Robert Stecker, and, in a slightly different form, Kenneth Taylor, is presented and assessed in the third chapter. Briefly, this view shares the idea of gappy propositions as non-truth-evaluable semantic contents of sentences containing genuinely empty names along the lines of Salmon's view. In reply to some other issues, besides the issues with semantic content, this view suggests that competent and rational speakers widely and systematically conflate some descriptive propositions pragmatically implicated by utterances of sentences containing empty names with the semantic contents of such sentences.

The last chapter of the thesis, chapter 4, acts as a summary and conclusion of the previous chapters. I summarize my reasons for why I do not think that any of the Neo-Russellian views provides a successful defense of Neo-Russellianism. Then I discuss some hypothetical defenses of Neo-Russellianism and argue that none of them is plausible. The conclusion, to my eye, seems to be that Neo-Russellianism, at least with regard to the problems raised by genuinely empty names, is deeply problematic.

CHAPTER 1

BRAUN ON EMPTY NAMES

§1.0. Introduction

In this chapter, I argue against Braun's theory of empty names. In section 1, Neo-Russellianism is introduced. In section 2, called 'the first set of problems', I discuss the issues raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism. Then, in section 3, I explain Braun's semantics of empty names as a defense of Neo-Russellianism. Subsequently, in section 4, I discuss how Braun's semantics of empty names replies to the first set of problems. In section 5, called 'the second set of problems', I discuss the issues raised by empty names for Braun's semantics of empty names. Then, in section 6, I explain Braun's theory of understanding sentences containing empty names. Subsequently, in section 7, I discuss how Braun's theory of understanding sentences (containing empty names) replies to the second set of problems. Let me call Braun's semantics of empty names and Braun's theory of understanding sentences containing empty names together 'Braun's theory of empty names' or for short 'Braun's theory'. In section 8, called 'the third set of problems', I discuss a new set of issues raised by empty names for Braun's theory and show why neither Braun's semantics of empty names nor Braun's theory of understanding sentences containing empty names seems promising with regard to these issues. Last, but not least, in section 9, called 'the forth set of problems', I discuss the internal coherency of Braun's theory. In section 10, I conclude that Braun's theory should be resisted.

§1.1. Neo-Russellianism

By Neo-Russellianism I mean any theory that is committed to the conjunction of:

(i) The semantic content of a name[1] is the object to which the name refers.

(ii) The semantic content of a predicate[2] is the property or relation to which the predicate refers (or expressed by the predicate).

(iii) The semantic content of a sentence[3] (uttered in a context) is the Russellian structured proposition expressed by that sentence.[4]

(iv) The semantic content of a clause of the form ⌜that S⌝ is the Russellian structured proposition semantically expressed by 'S'.[5]

(v) The semantic content of 'believes' is the *binary* relation *BEL.*

Neo-Russellianism might be thought as an amalgamate of different theses: Millianism (i) and Russellianism with regard to the content of predicates, sentences, 'that'-clauses, and propositional attitude verbs, (ii)-(v).Neo-Russellianism has been defended by many.[6] However, it encounters different problems; most notably, problems raised by empty names.

§1.2. The First Set of Problems: Problems for Neo-Russellianism

In this section, I introduce five problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism. In each case, I specify different assumptions underlying the problem and discuss the logical formulation of the problem. Here are the problems.

Problem 1. The Apparent *Meaningfulness* of *Empty Names.*

Consider the names 'Vulcan' or 'Sherlock Holmes'. Here is a sketch of the problem (Braun; 2005, 596-7):

> Let's assume, *for the moment*, that the proper names 'Vulcan' and 'Sherlock Holmes' fail to refer. Ordinary speakers judge these names to be meaningful, unlike the nonsensical string of phonemes 'thoodrupqua'. But (one might plausibly claim) if ordinary speakers judge that 'Vulcan' and 'Sherlock Holmes' are meaningful, then they have semantic contents. Yet Millianism entails that they do not have semantic contents. Thus one might conclude that Millianism is false.

My formulation of the problem goes like this:

(PM1)

(i) Ordinary speakers have the intuition that 'Vulcan' (or 'Sherlock Holmes') is meaningful.

(ii) If ordinary speakers have the intuition that a proper name[7] is meaningful, then that name has semantic content.

(iii)'Vulcan' (or 'Sherlock Holmes') has semantic content.

(iv)If Millianism is correct, then 'Vulcan' (or 'Sherlock Homes') does not have semantic content.

So

(v) Millianism is not correct (and hence Neo-Russellianism is not correct).

Here is a short note about the role of each premise. The first premise establishes the *existence of the intuition* of the *meaningfulness* of 'Vulcan' (or 'Sherlock Homes'). The second premise establishes the *validity of the intuition* in question in the following sense: for *proper names*, the *intuitive* notion of *meaningfulness* is legitimately connected to the *theoretical* notion of having *semantic content*. From (i) and (ii), (iii) follows. And finally, (iv) establishes that Millianism contradicts (iii). Consequently, by reductio, Millianism is not correct. And hence, Neo-Russellianism is not correct.

Here, in addition, is a short note about the justification of each premise. Let us take (i) as reporting a fact. (ii) might be supported by the assumption that our intuitive (pre-theoretical) notion of meaningfulness of proper names should be explained in terms of the theoretical notion of having semantic content. Hence, when ordinary speakers take a proper name as meaningful, the name should theoretically be assigned a semantic content. And finally (iv) can be justified as follows:

(PM1)-(iv)

(a) The semantic content of a proper name is the individual/object to which it refers. [SM[8]: Neo-Russellianism (i) (Millianism)]

(b) 'Vulcan' (or 'Sherlock Holmes') is a proper name that does not refer. [SM]

So,

(c) 'Vulcan' (or 'Sherlock Holmes') has no semantic content.

Therefore, (v) follows: if Millianism is correct, 'Vulcan' does not have semantic content. And, hence, (PM1).

Problem 2. The Apparent *Meaningfulness* of Atomic Simple *Sentences*[9] Containing Empty Names.

Consider:

(1) Vulcan is nonexistent.

(2) Sherlock Holmes is a detective.

Here is a sketch of the problem (Braun; 2005, 597):

> If Millianism is true, then the names 'Vulcan' and 'Sherlock Holmes' have no semantic content. If a name lacks semantic content, then the sentences in which the name appears also lack semantic content. Therefore if Millianism is true, then sentences containing 'Vulcan' and 'Sherlock Holmes' have no semantic content. If a sentence has no semantic content, then ordinary speakers will judge that it is not meaningful. But ordinary speakers think that many sentences containing these names are meaningful, for instance, the sentence 'Vulcan does not exist' and 'Sherlock Holmes is a detective'. So it seems, once again, that Millianism is incorrect.

Here is my formulation of the problem:

(PM2)

(i) Ordinary speakers have the intuition that (1) (or (2)) is meaningful.

(ii) If ordinary speakers' have the intuition that a sentence[10] is meaningful then that sentence has semantic content.

(iii)(1) (or (2)) has semantic content.

(iv)If Millianism is correct, then (1) (or (2)) does not have semantic content.

So

(v) Millianism is not correct (and hence Neo-Russellianism is not correct).

Here is a short note about the role of each premise. The first premise establishes the *existence of the intuition* of the *meaningfulness* of (1) (or (2)). The second premise establishes the *validity of the intuition* in question in the following sense: for declarative *sentences*, the *intuitive* notion of *meaningfulness* is legitimately connected to the *theoretical* notion of having *semantic content*. From (i) and (ii), (iii) follows. And finally, (iv) establishes that Millianism contradicts (iii). Consequently, by reductio, Millianism is not correct. And hence, Neo-Russellianism is not correct.

Here, in addition, is a short note about the justification of each premise. Like (PM1), let us take (i) as reporting a fact. (ii) might be supported by the assumption that our intuitive (pre-theoretical) notion of meaningfulness of declarative sentences should be explained in terms of the theoretical notion of having semantic content. Hence, when ordinary speakers take a declarative sentence as meaningful, the sentence should theoretically be assigned a semantic content. And finally (iv) can be justified as follows:[11]

(PM2)-(iv)

(a) The semantic content of a proper name is the individual/object to which it refers. [SM: Neo-Russellianism (i) (Millianism)]

(b) 'Vulcan' (or 'Sherlock Holmes') is a proper name that does not refer. [SM]

(c) 'Vulcan' (or 'Sherlock Holmes') has no semantic content. [from (a) and (b)]

(d) If a proper name lacks semantic content, a sentence containing that name lacks semantic content. [SM: the appropriate version of the principle of compositionality (Compositionality I)]

(e) (1) (or (2)) lacks semantic content. [from (c) and (d)]

Therefore, (iv): if Millianism is correct, (1) (or (2)) does not have semantic content. Then (v) follows. And, hence, (PM2).[12]

Problem 3. The Apparent *Truth Value* of Atomic Simple *Sentences* Containing Empty Names

Consider:

(7) Vulcan exists.

(8) Sherlock Holmes is a grapefruit.

Here is a sketch of the problem (Braun, 2005, 597):

> The previous argument [the above argument] says that if Millianism is true, then sentences containing 'Vulcan' and 'Sherlock Holmes' have no semantic content. But Millianism says that a sentence has the same truth value as its semantic content. So if Millianism is true, then sentences containing the names 'Vulcan' or 'Sherlock Holmes' have no truth value. But some sentences containing 'Vulcan' or 'Sherlock Holmes' do have truth values. For instance, the sentences 'Vulcan exists' and 'Sherlock Holmes is a grapefruit' are false, and sentences 'Vulcan does not exist' and 'According to certain stories by Conan Doyle, Holmes is a detective' are true.

Here is my formulation of the problem in one of its forms:

(PM3)

(i) Ordinary speakers have the intuition that (7) (or (8)) is false.

(ii) If ordinary speakers' have the intuition that a sentence[13] is false, then that sentence has the truth value of falsehood, and hence a truth value.

(iii)(7) (or (8)) has the truth value of falsehood, and hence a truth value.

(iv)If Millianism is correct, then (7) (or (8)) does not have any truth value.

So

(v) Millianism is not correct (and hence Neo-Russellianism is not correct).

Here is a short note about the role of each premise. The first premise establishes the *existence of the intuition* of the *falsity* of (1) (or (2)). The second premise establishes the *validity of the intuition* in question in the following sense: for declarative sentences, the intuitive notion of *being false* is legitimately connected to the theoretical notion of having *the truth value of falsehood.* From (i) and (ii), (iii) follows. And finally, (iv) establishes that Millianism contradicts (iii). Consequently, by reductio, Millianism is not correct. And hence, Neo-Russellianism is not correct.

Here, in addition, is a short note about the justification of each premise. Like previous arguments, (i) is taken as reporting a fact. (ii) is based on the assumption that the intuitive notion of falsehood should be explained in terms of the theoretical notion of having the truth value of falsehood. Hence, when ordinary speakers take a declarative sentence as false, the sentence should theoretically be assigned the truth value of falsehood, and therefore a truth value. Finally, (iv) can be justified as follows[14]:

(PM3)-(iv)

(a) The semantic content of a proper name is the individual/object to which it refers. [SM: Neo-Russellianism (i) (Millianism)]

(b) 'Vulcan' (or 'Sherlock Holmes') is a proper name that does not refer. [SM]

(c) 'Vulcan' (or 'Sherlock Holmes') has no semantic content. [from (a) and (b)]

(d) If a proper name lacks semantic content, a sentence containing that name lacks semantic content. [SM: Compositionality I]

(e) (7) (or (8)) lacks semantic content. [from (c) and (d)]

(f) If a sentence lacks semantic content, it lacks truth value. [SM]

(g) (7) (or (8)) does not have any truth value. [from (e) and (f)]

Therefore, (iv): if Millianism is correct, (7) (or (8)) does not have any truth value. Then, (v) follows. And, hence, (PM3).

The above argument, (PM3), can be repeated by the following sentences (instead of (7) (or (8))):

(6) Vulcan does not exist.

(9) According to certain stories by Conan Doyle, Holmes is a detective

The only difference is this: this time the intuition about (6) (or (9)) is that it is true. Again from the premise that (6) (or (9)) is true, it follows that it has the truth value of truth, and hence a truth value. The rest of the argument is the same.[15]

Problem 4. The Apparent *Truth* of *Attitude* (or Indirect) *Report Sentences* with 'that'-clauses containing Empty Names

Here is a sketch of the problem (Braun, 2005, 597):

> Suppose that Urbain Le Verrier sincerely utters 'Vulcan is a planet' (in French) and that Stephen Hawking utters 'Vulcan does not exist'. Then the attitude ascriptions 'Le Verrier believes that Vulcan is a planet' and 'Hawking says that Vulcan does not exist' are true. But according to Millianism, 'Vulcan is a planet ' and 'Vulcan does not exist' have no semantic content and the 'that'-clauses that appear in these attitude ascriptions fail to refer. But then those attitude ascriptions are not true, if Millianism is correct.

Before explaining my formulation of the problem, it should be noted that this problem is different from problem 3. These problems differ in two aspects. First, in problem 3, we are just concerned with simple sentences, which do not contain 'that'-clauses[16]; in problem 4, we are concerned about the attitude (or indirect) report sentences, which do contain 'that'-clauses. Second, and more importantly, what is at stake in problem 3 is that some sentences seem to *have a truth value* (or to be *truth evaluable*) when Millianism implies that they do not have any truth value (or are not truth evaluable); in contrast, what is at stake in problem 4 is that some sentences seem to be *true* when Millianism implies that they are not.

Coming back to my formulation of problem 4, consider the following two sentences again:

(3) Le Verrier believes that Vulcan is a planet.

(4) Stephen Hawking says that Vulcan does not exist.

Also assume that:

(3.1) Le Verrier, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'Vulcan is a planet'.

(4.1) Hawking, on reflection, utters 'Vulcan does not exist'.

The problem can be formulated in terms of either (3) and (3.1) or (4) and (4.1). Here is the problem formulated in terms of the former:

(PM4)

(i) Le Verrier is a competent and rational speaker who, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'Vulcan is a planet'. [(3.1)]

(ii) If a competent and rational speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'S', then she believes that S. [SM]

(iii) Le Verrier believes that Vulcan is a planet.

(iv) (3) is true. [(iii) and T-Schema]

(v) If Millianism is correct, then (3) is not true.

So

(vi) Millianism is not correct (and hence Neo-Russellianism is not correct).

Here is a short note about the role of each premise. (i) establishes the existence of a particular event, i.e. Le Verrier's sincere assent to 'Vulcan is a planet'. (ii) is a Disquotational Principle (DP)[17]. We can place certain plausible restrictions on (DP)[18]. I would call the above formulation of (DP) the 'Disquotational Principle of Belief' (DPB). (iii) is the result of (i) and (ii), and (iv) follows from (iii). Finally, (v) establishes that Millianism contradicts (iv). Consequently, by reductio, Millianism is not correct. And hence, Neo-Russellianism is not correct.

And here is a short note about the justification of each premise. (i) is taken as reporting a fact. (ii), i.e. (DPB), is an assumption. It should be noted, however, that what is rejected by Millians is either the Converse Disquotational Principle [19] (CDP), as I call it,[20] or Strong Disquotational Principle[21] (SDP)[22], not (DP). Hence, (DPB) is as plausible for Millians as for non-Millians. (iii) follows from (i) and (ii) by UI and modus ponens. (iv) follows from (iii) by the T-schema. And finally (v) can be justified as follows:

(PM4)-(v)

(a) The semantic content of a proper name is the individual/object to which it refers. [SM: Neo-Russellianism (i) (Millianism)]

(b) 'Vulcan' is a proper name that does not refer. [SM]

(c) 'Vulcan' has no semantic content. [from (a) and (b)]

(d) If a proper name lacks semantic content, a sentence containing that name lacks semantic content. [SM: Principle of Compositionality I.]

(e) (5), i.e. 'Vulcan is a planet', lacks semantic content. [from (c) and (d)]

(f) The 'that'-clause in (3) does not have any referent. [from Neo-Russellianism (iv) and (e)]

(g) (3) is not true. [from Neo-Russellianism (v) and the appropriate version of the principle of compositionality (Compositionality II)]

Therefore, (v): if Millianism is correct, (3) is not true. Then, (vi) follows. And, hence, (PM4).

A similar problem can be formulated in terms of (4) and (4.1). The Disquotational Principle this time has the following form: If a competent and rational speaker, on reflection, utters 'S', then she *says* that S. Let's call this formulation of (DP) the 'Disquotational Principle of Saying' (DPS). Assuming (4.1), the rest of the argument is the same.

Problem 5. Belief and Sincere Assertive Utterance

Here is a sketch of the problem (Braun; 2005, 597-8):

Generally, a person sincerely and assertively utters a sentence only if she believes its semantic content. (For instance, a person sincerely and assertively utters 'George Bush is a republican' only if she believes the proposition that George Bush is a republican). But according to one of our earlier augments, if Millianism is true, then the sentence 'Vulcan does not exist' has no semantic content. Therefore, if Millianism is true, then it is not the case that anyone believes the (nonexistent) semantic content of 'Vulcan does not exist'. Thus if Millianism is true, then no one ever sincerely and assertively utters 'Vulcan does not exist'. But clearly some people do. Therefore, Millianism is incorrect.

My formulation of the problem goes like this. Assume that:

(3.1) Le Verrier, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'Vulcan is a planet'.

This is the problem.

(PM5)

(i) Le Verrier, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'Vulcan is a planet'. [(3.1)]

(ii) If Millianism is correct, then no competent and rational speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'Vulcan is a planet'.

So

(iii)Millianism is not correct.

(ii), in turn, can be justified as follows:

(PM5)-(ii)

(a) The semantic content of a proper name is the individual/object to which it refers. [SM: Neo-Russellianism (i) (Millianism)]

(b) 'Vulcan' is a proper name that does not refer. [SM]

(c) 'Vulcan' has no semantic content. [from (a) and (b)]

(d) If a proper name lacks semantic content, a sentence containing that name lacks semantic content. [SM: Principle of Compositionality I.]

(e) (5), i.e. 'Vulcan is a planet', lacks semantic content. [from (c) and (d)]

(f) No competent and rational speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to a sentence that lacks semantic content. [SM]

(g) No competent and rational speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'Vulcan is a planet'.

Therefore, (ii): if Millianism is correct, then no competent and rational speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'Vulcan is a planet'. Then, (iii) follows. And, hence, (PM5).

The new assumption in the above argument is (f). Under classical logic, (f) is equivalent with the following principle; let me call it the 'principle of assenting to contentful' (AC):

(AC) If a competent and rational speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'S', then 'S' has semantic content.

It is worth mentioning that though the above problem, (PM5), requires (AC), it does not need the Disquotational Principle (DP) in any form – contra (PM4).

The above five problems represent some basic issues raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism. David Braun, to mention some (1993; 2005), has insightfully defended Neo-Russellianism against the above problems, and some other problems as well. In the next section I explain a key part of Braun's view, i.e. Braun's semantics of empty names, and in the section after that discuss how Braun's semantics of empty names may reply to the above five problems. This, however, leads us to further issues in the subsequent sections.

§1.3. Braun's Semantics of Empty Names

I will explain Braun's semantics of empty names in two parts: first, discussing the varieties of empty names, their uses, and their semantic reference and second, the varieties of propositions expressed by sentences containing empty names (or by different uses of such sentences).

1.3.1. Varieties of Empty Names, Their Uses, and Their Semantic Reference

Empty names, roughly speaking, are divided into two main groups: fictional names and mythical names.

> Plausible examples of empty names include certain names from fiction, such as 'Sherlock Holmes', which I shall call *fictional names*, and certain names from myth and false scientific theory, such as 'Pegasus' and 'Vulcan', which I shall call *mythical names*.
>
> (Braun; 2005, 596)

Consider fictional names first. If such names refer, they refer to fictional characters. In particular, Braun, from a metaphysical point of view, acknowledges such characters:

> These considerations, and others that I cannot go into here, suggest that fictional characters are actually existing abstract artifacts of (roughly) the

> same ontological category as novels and plots. Their existence supervenes on the pattern of activities of authors and readers, just as the existence of novels does. I believe we should accept the existence of fictional characters, even if we have questions about their exact nature […].
>
> (Braun; 2005, 609)

The *metaphysical* claim that fictional characters exist, however, does not imply the *semantic* claim that fictional names *always*, in all contexts of utterance, refer to such characters (Braun; 2005, 610). In fact, different occurrences (in Kaplan's (1989; 522) sense of 'occurrence') of a name may differ with regard to the *semantic* reference of the name. Braun distinguishes between an *authors'* inscription of fictional names and *our* utterances of them: With regard to the former, again, two different phases are distinguishable: the semantic reference of a fictional name, as used by the author, when the author writes his/her story initially, and the semantic reference of a fictional name as the author uses this name in subsequent reflections.[23] In Braun's opinion, "the thoughts and intensions that authors have as they inscribe names determine whether their inscriptions refer to characters." (Braun; 2005, 610). Therefore, in both phases of authors' inscriptions of fictional names, whether the relevant occurrences of fictional names semantically refer is indeterminate in general. Braun summarizes his view about authors' inscriptions of fictional names as follows:

> We have seen there are at least four possibilities regarding the semantic reference and content of Conan Doyle's inscriptions of 'Holmes' as he writes first story and as he subsequently reflects on the story. (i) All of the inscriptions fail to refer. (ii) All of the inscriptions refer to the fictional character Holmes. (iii) Some fail to refer while the rest refer to the character. (iv) Some (or all) are such that it is indeterminate whether they fail to refer or refer to the character. Which possibility is actual depends on (at least) the actual thoughts and intentions of Conan Doyle as he wrote and spoke. I do not know what happened with Conan Doyle, but I think that (iv) is more likely than many philosophers have supposed.
>
> (Braun; 2005, 612)

Concerning our utterances of fictional names, the matter is more complicated; the conclusion, however, is the same: whether the relevant occurrences of fictional names semantically refer is indeterminate in general. In Braun's (ibid.) words:

> So the references and contents of our utterances and inscriptions are determined, in part, by the references and contents of Conan Doyle's utterances and inscriptions. But our thoughts about fictional characters may also be relevant to determining the references and contents of our utterances of 'Holmes'. Given these facts, I think that the most likely possibility is that there is some indeterminacy in the semantic reference and content of our utterances of 'Sherlock Holmes'.

Before discussing mythical names, here is a point worth mentioning. Indeterminacy of semantic reference of occurrences of fictional names in Braun's view, both in authors' uses and others, is not the same as the ambiguity of fictional names in ordinary speakers' uses of them. As Braun emphasizes, "there is little or nothing in speakers' thoughts and intentions that indicates that the name 'Holmes' is ambiguous in their mouth" (Braun; 2005, 613). In particular, Braun suggests that the semantic indeterminacy in occurrences of fictional names in natural language can be resolved in a sophisticated language as follows:

> Resolve the ordinary indeterminacy in the name 'Holmes'. Replace the name (or the current use of it) with two names (or two uses), the non-referring 'Holmes1' and the referring 'Holmes2'. Distinguish carefully between the two, even if you do not always pronounce the subscripts. Do not expect the thoughts, intentions, and utterances of ordinary speakers to reflect your sophisticated theorizing and linguistic reform.
>
> (Braun; 2005, 614)

Therefore, to repeat, different uses of fictional names may have different semantic references. Though the semantic reference of a fictional name might be indeterminate in general, we, sophisticated philosophers, can determine it in a sophisticated language (this happens through distinguishing referring uses of the name from non-referring).

Let us come back to mythical names. Likewise, if such names refer, they refer to mythical objects. In particular, Braun, from a metaphysical point of view, acknowledges such objects:

> I believe that the metaphysical claim is correct: Le Verrier's mistaken theorizing does create an abstract artifact. The activities that occur during mistaken theorizing, such as Le Verrier's, are importantly similar to those that occur during storytelling. In both names are used and predicative sentences containing them are formulated. Reasoning and other mental processes occur. Texts that are seemingly susceptible to evaluation for truth are produced. Thus if storytellers' activities create fictional characters, then mistaken theorizers' activities create abstract objects of similar sort. So I grant that Le Verrier's mistaken theorizing creates an abstract artifact.
>
> (Braun, 2005, 615)

The *metaphysical* claim that mythical objects exist (as some kind of abstract artifacts), however, does not imply the *semantic* claim that mythical names *always*, in all contexts of utterance, refer to such objects. In fact, Braun is explicit that mythical names as used by *theorizers* (originators or inventors) do not refer to the correspondent artifacts created by such *mistaken* theorizing (ibid): "[…] I disagree with Salmon's semantical claim that Le Verrier's utterances of 'Vulcan' refer to the mythical object that he creates. His utterances of 'Vulcan' do not refer to the mythical object. They refer to nothing at all."

Our utterances of 'Vulcan', however, are semantically similar to our utterances of 'Holmes'; whether they refer is indeterminate in general. In Braun's words:

> All of this suggests that there is some indeterminacy in the reference and content of the name 'Vulcan' in our pre-theoretic language. It is indeterminate whether it fails to refer and has no content, or instead refers to a mythical object and has that object as its content. We sophisticated semantic theorists can avoid this indeterminacy by introducing two new names (or uses), 'Vulcan1' and 'Vulcan2'. But ordinary speakers do not.
>
> (Braun, 2005, 620)

To sum up, empty names are of two kinds: fictional and mythical. In each case, Braun distinguishes between authors' or theorizers' uses of empty names on the one hand and others' on the other hand. The theorizers' uses of *mythical* names, given that such theories are false and the theorizers do not intend to refer to anything like abstract objects created by their acts of theorizing, do not refer. In all other cases, whether occurrences of empty names refer is indeterminate in general. However, semantic theorists can resolve the problem by introducing different names in their sophisticated language (instead of one name in natural language). Let me roughly summarize Braun's view concerning the varieties of empty names, their uses, and their semantic reference in the following table:

Empty Names	Authors' / Theorizers' Uses	Others' Uses
Fictional Names	Indeterminate	Indeterminate
Mythical Names	No reference [24]	Indeterminate

1.3.2. Varieties of Propositions Expressed by Sentences Containing Empty Names

After resolving the indeterminacy of empty names as used by ordinary speakers in natural language in a sophisticated language, a sentence containing an empty name expresses either a singular Russellian proposition or a gappy proposition. I will explain.

Among different approaches to the nature of propositions, the Structured Proposition Theory contends that propositions are structured entities, not functions from possible worlds to truth values[25]. Among the Structured Proposition Theorists some take the constituents of propositions to be objects, properties, and relations; others do not[26]. I call the propositions of the former kind 'Russellian structured propositions' (RP)[27]. I call Russellian structured propositions containing an individual or a particular object 'singular Russellian propositions' (SRP)[28]. I call what is left from a singular Russellian proposition after taking the constituent individual or particular object from it a 'gappy proposition' (GP). Though the term 'gappy proposition' is more popular and I usually use it, other terms like 'nonstandard singular (Russellian) proposition', 'structurally challenged proposition', and 'unfilled proposition' might also be found in the literature – Braun, in particular, uses 'unfilled proposition' in his earlier works, e.g. (1993), and 'gappy proposition' in his later works, e.g. (2005). The idea of gappy propositions originally proposed by Kaplan – as Joseph Almog (1991, 618, n.15) reports – and briefly appeared in a footnote in the *Demonstratives* (Kaplan; 1989a, 496 n.23). Later on, Braun (1993, 2005) published extensive defenses of the view and others (Adams et al., 1994, 1997; Salmon, 1998; Taylor, 2000,) joined him. Discussing subtle differences among various accounts of gappy propositions goes beyond the scope of this chapter.[29] The basic idea of gappy propositions relies on the idea of propositions as structured entities. The latter, i.e. the idea of structured propositions, in short, goes like this:

> […] a proposition consists of a structure, along with individuals and relations. On this view, a proposition consists of *two different kinds of entities*. There is first of all its structure, which is an entity that might be compared to a scaffolding or, even better, a tree. This structured entity contains positions or "slots", ready to be filled with individuals and relations. The rest of a proposition consists of individuals and relations. These items appear within a structure, occupying positions in a scaffolding, or decorating parts of a tree. […]
>
> It follows that a sentence has two semantical functions or "duties" with respect to structured propositions. First, a sentence *generates* a propositional structure containing positions ready to receive basic semantic values (individuals and relations). Sentences with the same syntactic structure generate the same type of propositional structure. Second, the words in the sentence generate basic semantic values to insert into those positions. Two sentences with the same syntactic structure can generate different propositions by generating different basic semantic values.
>
> (Braun; 1993, 461-2)

Keeping this picture of propositions in mind, the idea of gappy propositions can be pictured as follows (ibid):

> Drawing these strands together, we can make the following observations. First, a propositional structure and the items filling positions in it are distinct entities; so it seems that there could be a propositional structure containing positions unfilled by either individuals or relations. Second, a sentence might successfully perform one of its semantical duties with respect to propositions, and fail in the other; specifically, a sentence might generate a propositional structure without generating basic semantic values to fill in that structure. Thus, we can conclude that the theory of structured propositions allows there to be sentences that express propositional structures with unfilled positions. Let's call such a propositional structure an unfilled proposition. According to The Unfilled Proposition View, sentences that make sense, and contain non-referring proper names, express unfilled propositions.

The following example will help us to further clarify the distinction between singular Russellian propositions and gappy propositions, for our purposes. Assume 'a' is an ordinary referring proper name and 'is F' is an ordinary predicate, namely it is not empty.[30] Consider the following sentence:

(12) a is F

(12) semantically expresses a singular Russellian proposition. This proposition can be represented by the following ordered pair:

(12p) <a, being-F>

Now assume 'n' is not an ordinary referring proper name; it does not refer to anything at all. In particular, assume 'n' is a specific non-denoting use of a mythical name by its original theorizer (or inventor). 'is F', as before, is an ordinary predicate, namely it is not empty. Consider the following sentence:

(13) n is F

(13) semantically expresses a gappy proposition. This proposition can be represented by the following ordered pair:

(13p) <___, being-F>

According to gappy proposition theorists, the semantic contribution of 'n' in (13p) is not a blank (or an empty set, depending on different representations of gappy propositions); 'n' does not have a semantic referent at all; it does not make any semantic contribution to (13p).[31]

Coming back to Braun's view, if an occurrence of an empty name, after resolving the indeterminacy in natural language in a sophisticated language, refers, the sentence containing that name semantically expresses a singular Russellian proposition, given that other terms in the sentence are not empty. In other words, such sentences do not differ from sentences containing ordinary referring proper names with regard to the kind of propositions they express: both semantically express singular Russellian propositions. If an occurrence of an empty name, after resolving the indeterminacy in natural language (in a sophisticated language), does not refer at all, the sentence containing that name semantically expresses a gappy proposition.

Let me finish my brief introduction of Braun's semantics of empty names here and turn to the first set of problems we discussed in section 2. In the following section, I exactly show how Braun's semantics of empty names replies to those problems and thereby provides a defense of Neo-Russellianism. Though I will point out my concerns with regard to each reply, I do not intend to reject them, at least at this stage – more serious issues will be raised later on.

§1.4. Replies to the First Set of Problems

Recall that the first set of problems were five issues raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism. Here I explain how Braun's semantics of empty names replies to each problem. In particular, I show the specific premise Braun's semantics of empty names may reject in each case.

Reply to Problem 1.

Recall problem 1. In a nutshell, it was this: since ordinary speakers have the intuition that proper names like 'Vulcan' or 'Sherlock Holmes' are meaningful, such names have semantic content; however, Neo-Russellianism (i) (Millianism) implies that such names do not have semantic content. Here is Braun's reply to this problem:

> Replying to the Problem of Meaningfulness for Names takes a bit more work. This objection claims that if ordinary speakers judge that a name is

> meaningful, then it has semantic content. This premise is incorrect: ordinary speakers judge that the names 'Vulcan' and 'Sherlock Holmes' are meaningful, even though they have no semantic content. Ordinary speakers so judge because they bear cognitive relations to these names that are importantly similar to the cognitive relations they bear to referring names. If an utterance of 'George W. Bush is in Prague' comes from a source that I take to be reliable, it will cause me to believe that George Bush is in Prague. My so believing may cause me to utter that same sentence. Utterances of sentences containing standard non-referring names have similar sorts of causal connections with belief. An utterance of 'Vulcan does not exist' from a source that I take to be reliable will cause me to believe the gappy proposition that Vulcan does not exist, and my believing this proposition may cause me to utter that sentence. Strings of sounds that we ordinarily call 'meaningless' do not have these characteristic causal relations with belief. An utterance of a (quasi) sentence that contains the sound 'thoodrupqua' will not cause me to believe a gappy proposition and I (currently) have no beliefs that cause me to utter (quasi) sentences containing that sound.
>
> (Braun; 2005, 600)

Recall my formulation of problem 1. The above reply suggests that premise (ii) is false. This premise was:

(PM1)-(ii) If ordinary speakers have the intuition that a proper name is meaningful, then that name has semantic content.

By rejecting (PM1)-(ii), (PM1) is blocked. The price Braun's semantics of empty names should pay is to cut the relationship between ordinary speakers' intuition of meaningfulness and the theoretical notion of having semantic content for *proper names*.

Reply to Problem 2.

In a nutshell problem 2 was this: since ordinary speakers have the intuition that sentences like (1) and (2), 'Vulcan is nonexistent' and 'Sherlock Holmes is a detective', are meaningful such sentences have semantic content; however, if

Millianism is correct, such sentences do not have semantic content. Here is Braun's reply to this problem (2005, 599-600):

> One of its premises says that if a name lacks semantic content, then sentences in which it appears also lack semantic content. This premise is false, on the above view. The name 'Vulcan' lacks semantic content, but the sentence 'Vulcan does not exist' does have a gappy propositional content.

Recall my formulation of problem 2. The above reply suggests that premise (iv) is false. This premise was:

(PM2)-(iv) If Millianism is correct, then (1) (or (2)) does not have semantic content.

In particular, Braun undermines (PM2)-(iv) by rejecting premise (d) of its justification. Premise (d) was:

(PM2)-(iv)-(d) If a proper name lacks semantic content, a sentence containing that name lacks semantic content.

In other words, the lack of semantic content of a name is not sufficient for the lack of semantic content of the sentence containing that name. Therefore, though 'Vulcan' and 'Sherlock Holmes' lack semantic content, it cannot be concluded that (1) and (2) lack semantic content.

Here I do not intend to argue against the above reply; I am inclined to accept it as a tentative reply to problem 2. Nevertheless, two points are worth mentioning.

First, the above reply gives up on a version of the principle of compositionality of content, namely (PM2)-(iv)-(d). However, this principle seems to be central to the Neo-Russellian project. If there were no principle of compositionality of content, then why should we want singular Russellian propositions in the first place? In other words, why should we require the semantic referent of a proper name to be a constituent of the proposition semantically expressed by the sentence containing that name when even without that semantic referent we may still have a legitimate proposition? It seems that if there are good reasons to give up on the compositionality of content in the above sense, then there are good reasons to give up on singular Russellian propositions altogether.

Second, the reply to problem 2, in comparison with the reply to problem 1, raises an unjustified asymmetry. Braun's reply to problem 1 rejects (PM1)-(ii); according to this reply, there is no legitimate link between ordinary speakers' intuition of meaningfulness on the one hand and the theoretical notion of having semantic content on the other hand for *proper names*. Braun's reply to problem 2, however, does not reject the parallel assumption in (PM2), i.e. (PM2)-(ii), rather it rejects (PM2)-(iv). In other words, this reply does not reject that there is a legitimate link between ordinary speakers' intuition of meaningfulness on the one hand and the theoretical notion of having semantic content on the other hand for *declarative sentences*. Braun's methodology in replying to the two problems raises an unjustified asymmetry: while from the assumption that ordinary speakers have the intuition that a proper name is meaningful, it *cannot* be inferred that the name in question has semantic content, from the assumption that ordinary speakers have the intuition that a declarative sentence is meaningful, it *can* be inferred that the sentence in question has semantic content. Braun's replies would do better by either avoiding this asymmetry or justifying it.

Reply to Problem 3.

Recall problem 3. In a nutshell it was this: since ordinary speakers have the intuition that sentences like (7) and (8), 'Vulcan exists' and 'Sherlock Holmes is a grapefruit', are false, such sentences have a truth value; however, if Millianism is correct, such sentences do not have a truth value (since they lack semantic content). Braun provides two replies to this problem.

Here is the first reply to problem 3:

> Gappy propositions bear truth values, so sentences that semantically express them do so also. In fact, sentences that express gappy propositions usually have the truth values that we pre-theoretically judge them to have. The sentences 'Vulcan exists' and 'Sherlock Holmes is a grapefruit' are false, because the atomic gappy propositions that they express are false. The sentence 'Vulcan does not exist' is true. And a reasonable theory of truth in fiction would imply that the sentence 'According to certain stories by Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes is a detective' is true, for the sentence 'Sherlock

> Holmes is a detective' express a gappy proposition that is explicitly expressed by one of the sentences in Conan Doyle's stories, or is implied (in some suitable sense) by the propositions expressed by sentences in the stories.
>
> (Braun; 2005, 600)

Recall my formulation of problem 3. The above reply suggests that premise (v) is false. Braun undermines (PM3)-(iv) by rejecting premise (d) of its justification, namely that if a proper name lacks semantic content, a sentence containing that name lacks semantic content.[32]

And here is the second reply to problem 3:

> Fortunately, none of these questions about the truth values of atomic gappy propositions really matter much for the Gappy Proposition Theory. Consider a slightly revised version of the theory that says that all atomic gappy propositions, and their negations, are neither true nor false. This revised Gappy Proposition Theory entails that sentences (6), (7), (8), and (14) [33] are all truthvalueless.
>
> (6) Vulcan does not exist.
>
> (7) Vulcan exists.
>
> (8) Sherlock Holmes is a grapefruit.
>
> (14) It is not the case that Vulcan exists.
>
> This consequence is contrary to ordinary intuition. But the revised Gappy Proposition Theory can give a remarkably simple and plausible explanation of these ordinary intuitions – in fact, the same explanation that the original theory can give. Here it is: Ordinary speakers think that the sentence 'Vulcan does not exist' is true because they believe the gappy proposition that Vulcan does not exist. They think that the sentence 'Sherlock Holmes is a grapefruit' is false because they believe the gappy proposition that Sherlock Holmes is not a grapefruit.
>
> (Braun; 2005, 607-8)

Again, recall my formulation of problem 3. The above reply suggests that premise (ii) is false. This premise was:

(PM3)-(ii) If ordinary speakers have the intuition that a sentence is false, then that sentence has a truth value (the truth value of falsehood).[34]

To sum up, the first reply suggests giving up on (PM3)-(v)-(d) by accepting gappy propositions as the content of atomic sentences containing empty names. The second reply suggests cutting off the relationship between ordinary speakers' intuition of being false (or true) and the theoretical notion of having a truth value. Not to reject the above replies, the methodologies behind the two replies seem radically different. Obviously Braun does not mean to hold *both* replies simultaneously; the first reply leads to the acceptance of gappy propositions when the second is consistent with the rejection of gappy propositions – for example, it is consistent with the view that atomic sentences containing empty names express no proposition at all. The point I am concerned here is this: the second reply plus parallel replies to problem 1 and 2 seem to undermine any need for gappy propositions. Remember that we could cut the relationship between ordinary speakers' intuition of meaningfulness and the theoretical notion of having semantic content for proper names as well as declarative sentences as possible replies to problem 1 and 2. It seems that doing so opens the way for cutting off the relationship between ordinary speakers' intuition of being false (or true) and the theoretical notion of having a truth value as suggested in the second reply to problem 3. But if so, namely if there is no legitimate link between the intuition of meaningfulness *and* the theoretical notion of having semantic content as well as between the intuition of being true or false *and* the theoretical notion of having a truth value, then we might wonder why we need to accept gappy propositions as a kind of semantic content for atomic sentences containing empty names at all.

Reply to Problem 4.

In a nutshell, problem 4was this: since some speakers, on reflection, sincerely assent to sentences like (5) and (6), i.e. 'Vulcan is a planet' and 'Vulcan does not exist', there are *true* attitude (or indirect) report sentences with 'that'-clauses containing empty names; however, if Millianism is correct, such attitude (or indirect) report sentences are not true because their 'that'-clauses fail to refer. Here is Braun's reply to this problem:

> […] attitude ascriptions that contain empty names in 'that'-clauses can be true on the Gappy Proposition Theory. The 'that'-clauses 'that Vulcan is a planet' and 'that Vulcan does not exist' refer to gappy propositions. If Le Verrier sincerely utters 'Vulcan is a planet' (in French) and Hawking utters 'Vulcan does not exist', then the attitude ascriptions 'Le Verrier believes that Vulcan is a planet' and 'Hawking says that Vulcan does not exist' are true.
>
> (Braun; 2005, 600)

This is where a key advantage of the gappy proposition view over the no proposition view appears. Since according to the latter sentences containing empty names do not express any proposition at all, gappy or not, 'that'-clauses made out of them also do not refer to any proposition. This brings about the conclusion that attitude (or indirect) report sentences containing such 'that'-clauses also do not express any proposition and hence cannot be true. The gappy proposition view, however, is able to account for the truth of such attitude (or indirect) report sentences.

Recall my formulation of problem 4. The above reply suggests that premise (v) is false. Braun undermines (PM4)-(v) by rejecting premise (d) of its justification, namely that if a proper name lacks semantic content, a sentence containing that name lacks semantic content.[35]

Reply to Problem 5.

In a nutshell, problem 5 was this: since some speakers, on reflection, sincerely assent to sentences like (5), i.e. 'Vulcan is a planet', such sentences are assertable; however, if Millianism is correct, no competent and rational speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to such sentences since they have no semantic content. Braun's reply to the problem goes like this (ibid):

> Furthermore, there is no problem about belief and sincere assertive utterance. A person who sincerely and assertively utters 'Vulcan does not exist' really does believe the semantic content of the sentence, namely a gappy proposition.

Recall my formulation of problem 5. The above reply suggests that premise (ii) is false. Braun undermines (PM5)-(ii) by rejecting premise (d) of its justification, namely if a proper name lacks semantic content, a sentence containing that name lacks semantic content.[36]

Let me summarize. Braun's replies to the first set of problems, i.e. the five issues raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism, hinge on two key points: First, there is no legitimate link between ordinary speakers' intuitions of the content or truth (or falsehood) on the one hand and the theoretical notions of having semantic content or truth value on the other hand (replies to problems 1 and 3). Second, there are gappy propositions, propositions that lack a constituent (replies to problems 2, 4, and 5). In the middle, I briefly pointed at the tension between the two points: it seems that the first point can plausibly be extended to reply to problems 2, 4, and 5 and hence there might be no need to postulate gappy propositions at all. Leaving aside this criticism, in the next section, I introduce some issues for gappy propositions themselves.

§1.5. The Second Set of Problems: Problems for Braun's Semantics of Empty Names

In this section, I introduce three problems raised by empty names for gappy propositions (rather than for Neo-Russellianism). In each case I specify different assumptions underlying the problem by providing a logical formulation of it. Here are the problems.

Problem 6. *Believing* an Atomic Gappy Proposition

Here is a sketch of the problem:

> The first objection claims that no reasonable person could believe an atomic gappy proposition, such as the proposition that Vulcan exists. A proponent of this objection might follow Bertrand Russell (1910-11) in holding that the propositions that an agent thinks, entertains, and believes are (in some sense) "transparent" to that agent. Such a philosopher might say that anyone who entertained an atomic gappy proposition would recognize its gappiness, and recognize that it cannot be true, and so refrain from believing it, contrary to the Gappy Proposition Theory.
>
> (Braun; 2005, 601)

My formulation of the problem goes like this. Recall

(7) Vulcan exists.

According to Braun's semantics of empty names (7) semantically expresses an atomic gappy proposition. This proposition can be represented by:

(7p) <___, existing>

The problem is this:

(PM6)

(i) (7) expresses a gappy proposition, (7p).

(ii) No competent and rational speaker believes a gappy proposition.

(iii)No competent and rational speaker believes (7p).

(iv)Some competent and rational speakers, e.g. Le Verrier, believe the content of (7).

(v) (7) does not express a gappy proposition.

Here is a brief note about the role of each premise. (i) establishes a semantic claim, given that Braun's semantics of empty names is correct, (7) expresses a gappy proposition. (ii) links this semantic claim to an epistemic/psychological claim; if a proposition is *gappy* (a semantic claim) it cannot be *believed* by a competent and rational speaker (an epistemic/psychological claim). From (i) and (ii), (iii) follows. (iv) provides a counter example to (iii). Therefore, by reductio, (i) is not correct, so (v).

The justification of each premise, briefly, goes like this. (i) is justified by the very definition of gappy propositions according to Braun's semantics of empty names. (ii) can be justified as follows:

(PM6)-(ii)

(a) If a competent and rational speaker believes a gappy proposition, then she understands, entertains, it.

(b) If a competent and rational speaker understands, entertains, a gappy proposition, then it is introspectively obvious to her that that proposition is gappy.

(c) If it is introspectively obvious to a competent and rational speaker that a proposition is gappy, then it is introspectively obvious to her that that proposition cannot be true.

(d) If it is introspectively obvious to a competent and rational speaker that a proposition cannot be true, she does not believe that proposition.

(e) No competent and rational speaker believes a gappy proposition.

(e), i.e. (ii), follows from (a)-(d).

And finally the justification of (iv) seems straightforward: if Le Verrier, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'Vulcan exists', by the Disquotational Principle of Belief (DPB), i.e. if a competent and rational speaker, on reflection, sincerely assents to 'S', then she believes that S, it follows that Le Verrier believes that Vulcan exists.

The above problem hinges on this point: even if atomic sentences containing empty names express gappy propositions, this still does not suffice to explain how competent and rational speakers may believe such propositions.

Problem 7. Apparent Difference in Cognitive Significance

Here is the sketch of the problem:

> A normal speaker could understand sentences (5) and (15), believe that (5) is true and (15) is false.
>
> (5) Vulcan is a planet.
>
> (15) Sherlock Holmes is a planet.
>
> Such a person would believe the proposition semantically expressed by (5) and believe the negation of the proposition expressed by (15). But on the Gappy Proposition Theory, (5) and (15) semantically express the same gappy proposition, namely proposition (5/15p).
>
> (5/15p) <____, being-a-planet>
>
> Therefore, such a person would believe a proposition and its negation. But surely no normal speaker could do that. So, one might conclude, the Gappy Proposition Theory is incorrect.
>
> (Braun; 2005, 602)

My formulation of the problem goes like this:

(PM7)

(i) There is a *competent and rational* speaker who understands (5) and (15), believes that (5) is true and (15) is false.

(ii) If a competent and rational speaker understands (5) and (15), and believes that (5) is true and (15) is false, then she believes the proposition semantically expressed by (5) and the negation of the proposition semantically expressed by (15).

(iii) Therefore, there is a competent and rational speaker who believes the proposition expressed by (5) and the negation of the proposition expressed by (15).

(iv) If Braun's semantics of empty names is correct, then (5) semantically expresses the same proposition as (15), i.e. (5/15p).

(v) Therefore, if Braun's semantics of empty names is correct, there is a competent and rational speaker who believes the proposition semantically expressed by (5) and the negation of the very same proposition.

(vi) No competent and rational speaker believes a proposition and its negation simultaneously.

(vii) Therefore, Braun's semantics of empty names is not correct.

The above argument seems straightforward; therefore, let me not go through the justification of each premise separately. The problem hinges on the point that even if atomic sentences containing empty names express gappy propositions, that still does not suffice to explain how competent and *rational* speakers believe the contents of different sentences expressing *contradictory* gappy propositions.

Problem 8. Apparent *Resistance to Substitution* in Belief Ascriptions

Here is the sketch of the problem:

> The Gappy Proposition Theory entails that sentences (3) and (16) express the same proposition.
>
> (3) Le Verrier believes that Vulcan is a planet.
>
> (16) Le Verrier believes that Holmes is a planet.
>
> But (3) and (16) differ in truth value. Thus, the Gappy Proposition Theory is incorrect.

(Braun; 2005, 603)

Given that Braun's semantics of empty names is correct, (3) and (16) semantically express the same proposition which can be represented as:

(3/16p) <Le Verrier, *BEL*, <____, being-a-planet>>

The problem, then, in my formulation is this:

(PM8)

(i) There is a competent and rational speaker who understands (3) and (16), and believes that (3) is true and (16) is false.

(ii) If a competent and rational speaker understands (3) and (16), and believes that (3) is true and (16) is false, then she believes the proposition expressed by (3) and the negation of the proposition expressed by (16).

(iii) Therefore, there is a competent and rational speaker who believes the proposition expressed by (3) and the negation of the proposition expressed by (16).

(iv) If Braun's semantics of empty names is correct, (3) expresses the same proposition as (16), i.e. (3/16p).

(v) Therefore, there is a competent and rational speaker who believes the proposition expressed by (3) and the negation of the very same proposition.

(vi) No competent and rational speaker believes a proposition and its negation simultaneously.

(vii) Therefore, Braun's semantics of empty names is not true.

The above argument seems straightforward; therefore, let me not go through the justification of each premise separately. Again, the problem hinges on the point that even if atomic sentences containing empty names express gappy propositions, that still does not suffice to explain why competent and rational speakers believe a gappy proposition when it is expressed by one sentence rather another.

§1.6. Braun's Theory of Understanding Sentences

As we observed above, Braun's semantics of empty names encounters some problems, i.e. the second set of problems. To handle these problems, Braun appeals to his theory of *understanding sentences containing empty names*. This theory is the same as Braun's theory of understanding sentences containing referring names. The latter is the theory Braun uses to defend Neo-Russellianism against problems raised by co-referential names; a theory explaining understanding of both simple and belief report sentences in a unified way. Let me call this theory 'Braun's Theory of Understanding Sentences'. As I pointed out, Braun's theory of understanding sentences applies to sentences containing referring names as well as sentences containing empty names. In what follows, I explain the three most important aspects of this theory: that a competent and rational speaker believes, entertains, a proposition under a *propositional guise* (6.1.), that a rational and competent speaker may believe *contradictory* propositions under suitably different propositional guises (6.2.), and that a proposition might be *non-transparent* under some propositional guise in the sense that it might not be introspectively or a priori available to the competent and rational and speaker who believes, entertains, it (6.3.). In the next section, I will show how each aspect of Braun's theory of understanding sentences contributes to a reply to the issues raised by empty names for gappy propositions.

1.6.1. Believing under Propositional Guises

There are different ways of grasping, entertaining, and believing a single proposition. For example, consider:

(17) Hesperus is visible in the evening.

(18) Phosphorus is visible in the evening.

As Braun explains:

> […] there are different ways of grasping, and believing, a single proposition. In particular, there are different ways to grasp, and believe, the proposition that Venus is visible in the evening. A speaker can believe that proposition in one of these ways while failing to believe it in another way. Believing the position in one way may dispose him to think that (17) is true, but not dispose him to think that (18) is true. Conversely, believing the proposition in another way may dispose him to think that (18) is true, but not dispose him to think that (17) is true.
>
> (Braun; 1998, 572-3)

The idea of "different ways of grasping, believing, a single proposition" can be explained in various ways. Here is one: ways of grasping, believing, a single proposition, are *mental states* in virtue of which, or of being in them or of realizing them, one bears grasping, believing, attitude to a specific proposition. In Braun's words (ibid.):

> One natural elaboration distinguishes between mental states that a person may be in and the propositions to which the person bears attitudes in virtue of being in those mental states. Mental states, on such views, are (realized in human beings by) states of the brain or soul. They bear causal roles with respect to each other, and with respect to sensation and behavior; distinct mental states may (perhaps must) differ in their causal roles. On this view, ways of believing could be identified with certain mental states. Such a view could say that there are two distinct *belief states* such that any person who is in either state believes the proposition that Venus is visible in the evening. One of these belief states tends to cause people to utter (17), given the right set of other mental states (for example desire states), but does not tend to cause them to utter (18).The other belief state tends to cause them to utter (18), but not (17).

The above idea, in turn, can be worked out in more detail (Braun; 1998, 574):

> There is a further elaboration of this view that is convenient, vivid, and plausible (in my opinion). It identifies these mental states with states involving mental representations. On one view of this sort, to believe a proposition is to have in one's head (in the right way) a mental sentence that expresses that proposition. [37] These mental sentences express propositions because of their structures and because their constituents refer to individuals and express properties and relations. (The constituents might do this because their tokens stand in appropriate causal or historical relations to individuals and instances of properties and relations). Such a state, of having-sentence-S-in-one's-head, can have the causal role of a belief state. For convenience, I will say that if a person is in a mental state that involves a mental sentence,

> and that state has the right causal role for a belief state, then that sentence is in that person's *belief box*.

So *ways of grasping*, in the first level, can be identified with *some mental states*. These mental states, in the second level, can be characterized as those mental states that both involve appropriate *mental sentences* and have the right *causal role*.

This formulation of what ways of grasping, believing, might be is purposely vague: a single proposition might be grasped, believed, under different ways in different senses. Recall that there are different mental attitudes, e.g. believing, entertaining, doubting, etc. At one time, we may fix the mental attitude we are concerned with, as say, believing. In such a case, a single proposition can be believed in two different ways of *believing*. Another time, we may be concerned with two mental attitudes, say believing and entertaining. In such a case, a single proposition can be believed under one way of *believing* and entertained under another way of *entertaining* – these ways are different because they play different causal roles. Braun's following note might be understood better if we take the above point into consideration:

> Russellians often wish to speak of there being a single way in which one can both entertain and believe a proposition. But on the above view, to entertain a proposition in a certain way should be identified with being in a mental state, an *entertainment state*. Clearly this state cannot be identified with a *belief state* that allows one to believe that proposition in a certain way. So we need some explication of the idea that there is some *single* way in which one can *both* entertain and believe a proposition. These ways could be called "ways of taking propositions" or "propositional guises." On the mental-sentence view to follow, these guises can be identified with mental sentences: one entertains and believes a proposition under the same guise if the entertainment state and the belief state involve the same mental sentence. On a mental-state view that lacks mental sentences, one would need an alternative explanation. Perhaps one could appeal to certain *relations* between mental states (including, perhaps, causal or functional relations).
>
> (Braun; 1998, 574, n.36)

So 'ways of taking propositions' or 'propositional guises', identified as mental sentences or not, provide a useful terminology to explain the above point. At one time, when we are only concerned with a particular mental attitude, say believing, a single proposition can be believed in *different ways* since there are *different propositional guises* – though these ways share the same type of causal role, i.e. the typical causal role of belief states. Another time, when we are concerned with different mental attitudes, say believing and entertaining, a single proposition can be believed in one way and entertained in another way. These ways, as different mental states, play *different causal roles*, i.e. the typical causal roles of belief states and entertainment states.[38]

To make the above picture simpler, we may follow Braun (1998, 575) in the following assumption:

> To simplify the matter, let's assume that the mental sentences in a person's belief box are sentences of that person's natural language. So a person who speaks English can have (17) and (18) in his belief box. If he does, then he believes 'twice over" that Venus (Hesperus/Phosphorus) is visible in the evening. He will also be disposed to believe, in certain ways, that (17) and (18) are true.

So we take propositional guises, mental sentences in mental-sentence construal of Braun's view, to be sentences of the speaker's natural language.[39]

Let me summarize. A singular Russellian proposition (or a gappy proposition) can be understood in different ways since it can be entertained under different propositional guises. A person who utters a sentence containing an empty name says and believes a gappy proposition (Braun; 1993, 462; 2005, 598-9). Moreover, believing a gappy proposition always happens in one way of believing or another. A way of believing, in turn, is, at least partially, characterized by the propositional guise under which a proposition is entertained *and* believed. And finally, a propositional guise can, roughly speaking, be modeled by a mental sentence of the person's own natural language.

1.6.2. Believing Contradictory Propositions

Another important aspect of Braun's view of understanding, and believing, sentences is this: a rational person can believe a proposition and its negation simultaneously. In Braun's words (1998, 577), "one can rationally believe a proposition in one way, while failing to believe it in another way, and one can rationally believe a proposition in one way, while believing its negation in another, suitably different, way." For example, recall (17) and (18):

(17) Hesperus is visible in the evening.

(18) Phosphorus is visible in the evening.

As Braun (1998, 573) explains:

> Thus on this view, Hammurabi could think that an utterance of (17) is true because he believes, in one way, that Venus is visible in the evening; and he could also (at the same time) think that an utterance of (18) is false because he believes, in another, suitably different, way, that Venus is not visible in the evening. On this view, a rational person can believe a proposition and its negation, as long as he does so in suitably different ways.

This aspect of Braun's view lets him reply to two well-known problems for Millianism with regard to sentences containing co-referential proper names: a problem with cognitive significance and a problem with resistance to substitution in belief ascriptions. To see the application of this part of Braun's view, let me briefly explain what these problems are and how Braun replies to them. Here are these problems in order.

Problem 9. Apparent Difference in Cognitive Significance.

Consider:

(19) Hesperus is Hesperus.

(20) Hesperus is Phosphorus.

According to Neo-Russellianism (Millianism), (19) and (20) semantically express one proposition. This proposition can be represented by:

(19/20p) <Venus, being-identical-with, Venus>

The sketch of the problem, as formulated by Braun (Braun, 2002, 67) goes like this:

(PM9)

(i) There is a rational agent who understands (19) and (20), and believes that (19) is true and (20) is false.[40]

(ii) If a rational agent understands (19) and (20), and believes that (19) is true and (20) is false, then he believes the proposition semantically expressed by (19) and the negation of the proposition semantically expressed by (20).

(iii) Therefore, there is a rational agent who believes the proposition expressed by (19) and the negation of the proposition expressed by (20).

(iv) If Neo-Russellianism (Millianism) is correct, then (19) semantically expresses the same proposition as (20), i.e. (19/20p).

(v) Therefore, there is a rational agent who believes the proposition semantically expressed by (19) and the negation of that very same proposition.

(vi) No rational agent can believe a proposition and its negation.

(vii) Therefore, Millianism is not true.

Braun, in reply, rejects (vi); "that is, we can say that there are rational agents who believe both a proposition and its negation" (ibid). In particular, Braun can provide the following explanation for the phenomenon in question:

(EXP. 1) An Explanation of How a Rational Agent Can Believe (19/20p) and Its Negation Simultaneously

(i) A rational agent who understands both (19) and (20) can believe (19/20p) under an absolutely Hesperus-ish propositional guise. Believing (19/20p) under an absolutely Hesperus-ish propositional guise may dispose the agent to think that (19) is true.

(ii) The rational agent can believe the negation of (19/20p) under a mixed Hesperus-Phosphorus-ish propositional guise. Believing the negation of (19/20p) under a mixed Hesperus-Phosphorus-ish propositional guise may dispose the agent to think that (20) is false.

(iii)The rational agent can believe both (19/20p) and its negation. Believing a proposition and its negation simultaneously does not threaten the agent's rationality as long as she does so in suitably different ways, namely under different propositional guises (i.e. an absolutely Hesperus-ish propositional guise and a mixed Hesperus-Phosphorus-ish propositional guise).

Let me now turn to the second problem mentioned above and Braun's reply to it.

Problem 10. Apparent Resistance to Substitution in Belief Ascriptions

Consider:

(21) Hammurabi believes that Hesperus is visible in the evening.

(22) Hammurabi believes that Phosphorus is visible in the evening.

According to Neo-Russellianism (21) and (22) semantically express one proposition. This proposition can be represented by:

(21/22p) <Hammurabi, *BEL*, <Venus, being-visible-in-the-evening> >

The sketch of the problem, as formulated by Braun (2002, 73-4), goes like this:

(PM10)

(i) There is a rational agent who understands (21) and (22), and believes that (21) is true and (22) is false.

(ii) If a rational agent understands (21) and (22), and believes that (21) is true and (22) is false, then she believes the proposition expressed by (21) and the negation of the proposition expressed by (22).

(iii) Therefore, there is a rational agent who believes the proposition expressed by (21) and the negation of the proposition expressed by (22).

(iv) If Neo-Russellianism is correct, then (21) expresses the same proposition as (22), i.e. (21/22p).

(v) Therefore, there is a rational agent who believes the proposition expressed by (21) and the negation of the very same proposition.

(vi) No rational agent believes a proposition and its negation.

(vii) Therefore, Millianism is not correct.

Braun, in reply, rejects (vi) again. In particular, Braun can provide a similar explanation for the phenomenon in question:

(EXP. 2) An Explanation of How a Rational Agent Can Believe (21/22p) and Its Negation Simultaneously

(i) A rational agent who understands both (21) and (22) can believe (21/22p) under a Hesperus-ish propositional guise. Believing (21/22p) under a Hesperus-ish propositional guise may dispose the agent to think that (21) is true.

(ii) The rational agent can believe the negation of (21/22p) under a Phosphorus-ish propositional guise. Believing the negation of (21/22p) under a Phosphorus-ish propositional guise may dispose the agent to think that (22) is false.

(iii)The rational agent can believe both (21/22p) and its negation. Believing a proposition and its negation simultaneously does not threaten the agent's rationality as long as she does so in suitably different ways, namely under different propositional guises (i.e. a Hesperus-ish propositional guise and a Phosphorus-ish propositional guise).

These explanations show how believing under different propositional guises, the first aspect of Braun's view, can explain believing contradictory propositions, the second aspect of Braun's view. Let's now turn to the third aspect of his view.

1.6.3. Non-transparency of Propositions

Last but certainly not least, is the point about the non-transparency of gappy propositions. Gappy propositions are non-transparent in the following sense: one, a rational and competent speaker, may entertain an atomic gappy proposition without recognizing its gappiness (Braun; 2005, 601). This point links to what we may call the 'intrinsic-ness of belief states'. Braun explains the latter point as follows:

> On the metaphysics I favor, standing in the belief relation to a proposition requires that one be in a certain type of intrinsic mental state. These mental states are *intrinsic* in the following sense: you and your Twin Earth doppelganger have the same types of mental states of this sort, even though

> you believe different propositions. For instance, there is a type of intrinsic mental state that you share with your Twin Earth doppelganger which underlies your believing that Aristotle was a philosopher, but which underlies your doppelganger's believing that Twin Aristotle was a philosopher. You and Twin You differ in what you believe, despite the intrinsic similarity in your mental states, because your mental states stand in different causal relations to Aristotle and Twin Aristotle. These causal relations involve utterances of proper names such as 'Aristotle': Your utterances of the name 'Aristotle' refer to Aristotle, whereas your Twin's utterances refer to Twin Aristotle.
>
> (Braun; 2005, 601)

Given this kind of intrinsic-ness of belief states, if Twin You's utterance of 'Napoleon' fails to refer, when there is no Twin Napoleon in Twin Earth, and Twin You and You both, on reflection, sincerely assent to 'Napoleon is a general', then by the Disquotational Principle of Belief, it follows that Twin You and You both believe that Napoleon is a general. Though Twin You and You share the same *type* of intrinsic belief state, you believe different propositions: "Twin You is in an intrinsic mental state of the same type as the one underlies Your believing that Napoleon is a general. But Twin you ends up believing a gappy proposition" (ibid), contra you. In such a case,

> Of course, Twin You is entirely normal, just like You. Twin You cannot tell by introspection that he or she believes a gappy proposition, any more than You can. No *a priori* reasoning would reveal to Twin You that he or she believes a gappy proposition. Thus, Twin You does not think that he or she believes a gappy proposition, any more than You do so.
>
> (Braun; 2005, 601)

Let me summarize. Gappy propositions are non-transparent: a competent and rational speaker, may believe, entertain, a gappy proposition without recognizing its *gappiness*. This has two corollaries: First, it might not be *introspectively* obvious to one that she believes, entertain, a gappy proposition, and second, one might not be able to use *a priori* reasoning to discover that she believes, entertain, a gappy proposition (Braun;2005, 623, n.16).

At the end, two points concerning singular Russellian propositions seem worth mentioning.

First, suppose we reconstruct the above notion of non-transparency for singular Russellian propositions as follows:

> A competent and rational speaker may believe, entertain, a singular Russellian proposition without recognizing its *fullness*.

Then these propositions also seem to be non-transparent. For example, consider a competent and rational speaker who believes that Hesperus is nonexistent. Such a speaker believes that Hesperus is nonexistent without recognizing the fullness of the proposition that Hesperus is nonexistent.

Second, a competent and rational speaker may believe, entertain, a certain singular Russellian proposition when expressed by *one* sentence, and entertained under *one* propositional guise, but not when expressed by *another* sentence, and entertained under *another* propositional guise.

In the next section, I will show how Braun's theory of understanding sentences replies to the second set of problems, which are issues raised by empty names for Braun's semantics of empty names.

§1.7. Replies to the Second Set of Problems

Reply to Problem 6.

In a nutshell, problem 6 was this: Braun's semantics of empty names implies that sentences containing empty names express gappy propositions. So, if Braun's semantics of empty names is correct, ordinary speakers, e.g. Le Verrier, who believe propositions expressed by sentences containing empty names, e.g. 'Vulcan exists', believe gappy propositions. But no rational person believes an atomic gappy proposition since such propositions cannot be true (atomic gappy propositions are either false or neither true nor false depending on different views concerning their truth value).

Braun's (2005, 602) reply to this problem goes like this:

> […] a rational person can entertain an atomic gappy proposition without believing that it is gappy, and without believing that it is incapable of being true, and so can reasonably come to believe that gappy proposition.

Recall my formulation of the problem. The above reply suggests that premise (ii) is false. This premise was:

(PM6)-(ii) No competent and rational speaker believes a gappy proposition.

In particular, Braun undermines (PM6)-(ii) by rejecting premise (b) of its justification. This premise was:

(PM6)-(ii)-(b) If a competent and rational speaker understands, entertains, a gappy proposition, then it is introspectively obvious to her that that proposition is gappy.

Rejecting (PM6)-(ii)-(b) is based on the non-transparency of gappy propositions, the third aspect of Braun's theory of understanding sentences discussed above: a competent and rational speaker, may entertain an atomic gappy proposition without recognizing its gappiness (Braun; 2005, 601).

Reply to Problem 7.

Recall problem 7. In a nutshell it was this: One may believe (5), Vulcan is a planet, but refrain from believing (15), Sherlock Holmes is a planet. In such a case he might even believe the negation of (15). However, according to Braun's semantics of empty names, (5) and (15) semantically express the same gappy proposition. But surely no rational person believes a proposition and its negation simultaneously. So, Braun's semantics of empty names is not correct.

Braun's reply to this problem duplicates his reply to the parallel issue with regard to referring names, i.e. (PM9). More particularly, (5) and (15) semantically express the same proposition, i.e. (5/15p):

(5/15p) <____, being-a-planet>

A rational person may believe this proposition and its negation simultaneously if she does so in suitably different ways. As Braun (2005, 602-3) explains:

> Similarly, a rational Earthling could believe proposition (5/15p) in a "Vulcan-ish" way of believing and believe the negation of that same

> proposition in a "Sherlock Holmes-ish" way. [...] Such a person would rationally think that sentence (5) is true and sentence (15) is false.

Recall my formulation of problem 7. The above reply suggests that premise (vi) is false. This premise was:

(PM7)-(vi) No competent and rational speaker believes a proposition and its negation simultaneously.

A parallel explanation to (EXP. 1) might be offered for the phenomenon that a rational agent believes (5/15p) and its negation simultaneously: to make a long story short, such an agent believes (5/15p) under one propositional guise and its negation under another propositional guise (therefore he/she believes (5/15p) and its negation in suitably different ways of believing and hence no threat to his/her rationality).

Reply to Problem 8.

Recall problem 8. In a nutshell, it was this: Le Verrier may believe (5), Vulcan is a planet, and refrain from believing (15), Sherlock Holmes is a planet. If so, then, (3) and (16) can differ in truth value:

(3) Le Verrier believes that Vulcan is a planet.

(16) Le Verrier believes that Sherlock Holmes is a planet.

But according to Braun's semantics of empty names, (3) and (16) express the same gappy proposition, i.e. (3/16p):

(3/15p) <Le Verrier, *BEL*, <____, being-a-planet>>

Hence they cannot differ in truth value. So, Braun's semantics of empty names is not correct.

Braun's reply, roughly speaking, goes like this: That Le Verrier refrain from believing, asserting to, (15) does not entail that he does not believe (15). Therefore, (3) and (16) do not differ in truth value. However, a rational person, say a critic of Neo-Russellianism, may *think* that (3) and (16) differ in truth value. Such a person, even, may believe (3) and the negation of (16) simultaneously. Believing so does not threaten agent's rationality as long as he/she does so in suitably different ways. As Braun (2005, 604) explains:

> Sentences (5) and (15) express the same gappy proposition, according to the Gappy Proposition Theory. But as we saw, a rational agent can believe that proposition in a "Vulcan-ish" way, and believe its negation in a "Holmes-ish" way. Such a person would think that (5) is true and (15) is false. (3) and (16) contain 'that'-clauses whose contents are the gappy proposition expressed by both (5) and (15). Therefore, if the proposition expressed by (5) and (15) can be believed in different ways, then so can the gappy proposition expressed by both (3) and (16). Thus, it's quite plausible to think that a rational agent could believe the gappy proposition expressed by (3) in a "Vulcan-ish" way, and yet fail to believe it in a "Holmes-ish" way. In fact such an agent could believe the negation of the gappy proposition in a "Holmes-ish" way. Thus, a rational agent could think that (3) is true and (16) is false, even though they express the same gappy proposition. Therefore a rational speaker could think that (3) and (16) do, or could do, differ in truth value.

Recall my formulation of problem 8. The above reply, again, suggests that premise (vi) is false. This premise was:

(PM8)-(vi) No competent and rational speaker believes a proposition and its negation simultaneously.

A parallel explanation to (EXP. 2) might be offered for the phenomenon that a rational agent believes (3/15p) and its negation simultaneously.

Let us accept the above replies. In other words, let us assume that Braun's semantics of empty names can reply to the issues raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism, the first set of problems, and Braun's theory of understanding sentences can reply to the issues raised by empty names for Braun's semantics of empty names, the second set of problems. In the following sections, sections 8 and 9, I show how more serious problems may be raised for Braun's overall theory.

§1.8. The Third Set of Problems: New Open Questions for Braun's Theory

Let us call Braun's semantics of empty names and Braun's theory of understanding sentences together 'Braun's Theory' (BT). In what follows I put four new open questions forward for BT. These questions are about different intuitions concerning the content of sentences containing genuinely empty names (or such uses of them) – in particular, intuitions concerning the completeness, identity, informativeness, and the truth of the content of such sentences. The claim basically is that BT either does not provide promising explanations of these intuitions or, if it does, slips into a version of Neo-Fregeanism – and hence does not provide a defense of Neo-Russellianism. Before explaining these questions, one point should be emphasized. I distinguish between competent and rational speakers on the one hand and competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative (CRWC) speakers (on a specific subject) on the other hand. For example, Hammurabi who might be a competent and rational speaker in general might not be a CRWC speaker with regard to a specific subject, e.g. Hesperus, since he might not be informed that Hesperus is Phosphorus (in other words, he might not be well-informed). Or, one who is a competent and rational speaker in general and is well-informed that Hesperus is Phosphorus but does not contemplate enough on this and makes obviously false inferences is not a CRWC speaker. In what follows, I am concerned with CRWC speakers' intuitions: speakers who are competent, rational, well-informed (about a specific subject), and contemplative.

1.8.1. Intuitions about the Completeness of the Content

Taking into account that we are concerned with competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers, the question, properly speaking, is this:

(Q1) How do we explain the intuitions of competent, rational, well-Informed, and contemplative speakers about the *completeness* of the content of simple sentences containing empty names?

Consider:

(7) Vulcan exists.

According to Braun's semantics of empty names, the semantic content of (7) is a gappy proposition. A gappy proposition is an *incomplete* proposition. In other words, a gappy proposition lacks part of its content. Therefore, the content of (7) is *incomplete*. However, CRWC speakers who understand (7) and know that Vulcan does not exist do not seem to have the intuition that the content (or meaning) of (7) is *incomplete*. In particular, such speakers seem to sincerely and thoughtfully assert that (7) has complete content (or meaning). In other words, they have the intuition that (7) is *completely* meaningful. From this, it follows that such speakers have the intuition that the content (or meaning) of (7) is complete. The question, then, is how to explain this intuition according to BT.

Responses and Rebuttals

Response 1

On behalf of BT, one may respond as follows. As it has been mentioned in reply to problem 2, that 'Vulcan' does not refer to anything does not imply that (7) does not express any proposition. In particular, recall that the following premise of (PM 2) was false:

(PM2)-(iv)-(d) If a proper name lacks semantic content, a sentence containing that name lacks semantic content.

In fact, according to BT, (7) expresses a gappy proposition which can be represented by:

(7p) <___, Existence>

Therefore, CRWC speakers have the intuition that (7) is completely meaningful, since (7) semantically expresses (7p).

Rebuttal 1

The above response does not seem promising for two reasons.

First, the focus in problem 2 is on the intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the *meaningfulness* of simple sentences containing empty names; the phenomenon in need of explanation here is the intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the *completeness* of the meaning of simple sentences containing empty names. Though gappy propositions might be counted as the semantic contents of sentences containing empty names, and thereby account for the intuition of meaningfulness of such sentences, it is not obvious how they can account for the intuition of *completeness* of the meaning of such sentences since gappy propositions themselves are incomplete.

Second, recall that gappy propositions are non-transparent; they are not introspectively and a priori available to CRWC speakers. Therefore gappy propositions are not available to CRWC speakers at the intuitive level. Then, even if (7) expresses a gappy proposition, i.e. (7p), this still does not suffice to explain the intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the completeness of the meaning of (7) since (7p) is not available to CRWC speakers at the intuitive level.

Response 2

On behalf of BT, one may respond as follows. CRWC speakers have the intuition that the meaning of (7) is complete because they bear cognitive relations to (7) that are importantly similar to the cognitive relations they bear to sentences expressing singular Russellian propositions. For example, if an utterance of 'George Bush exists' comes from a source that a CRWC speaker takes to be reliable, it will cause the speaker to believe that George Bush exists. Her so believing may cause her to utter that same sentence. In a parallel way, utterances of (7), and other sentences containing genuinely empty names, have similar sort of causal connections with beliefs. An utterance of (7) from a source that a CRWC speaker takes to be reliable will cause her to believe (7p) and her believing (7p) may cause her to utter (7). [41]

Rebuttal 2

It might be true that CRWC speakers have *similar cognitive relations* to atomic sentences containing genuinely empty names and atomic sentences containing referring names. It is not, however, clear how this explains the intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the completeness of the content of utterances of either kind of sentences.[42] For example, consider the cognitive relation mentioned above: if an utterance of a sentence comes from a source that the speaker takes to be reliable then it causes the speaker to believe the content of the sentence. Both utterances of (7) and 'George Bush exists' may satisfy this cognitive relation by satisfying the above conditional. Nevertheless, satisfying this cognitive relation seems neither necessary nor sufficient for CRWC speakers to have the intuition of the completeness of the content in general.

It is not necessary because it seems possible that a CRWC speaker have the intuition of the completeness of the content when the above cognitive relation does not hold. The conditional does not hold if the antecedent is true and the consequent is not, namely, an utterance of a sentence comes from a source that the speaker takes to be reliable but it does not cause the speaker to believe the content of the sentence. Consider an utterance of a sentence uttered by a speaker who is taken to be reliable by a specific hearer when at the same time the utterance does not cause the hearer to believe the content of the sentence (because, for instance, the hearer believes on independent grounds that the sentence uttered is false). So the cognitive relation does not hold. Nevertheless, the hearer may have the intuition that the sentence in question has a complete meaning. Therefore, the cognitive relation in question is not necessary for the intuition of the completeness of the content.

It is not sufficient because it seems possible that the above cognitive relation holds when a CRWC speaker does not have the intuition of completeness of the content. An utterance of a sentence may come from a source that a specific hearer takes to be reliable; for example, an utterance of the sentence 'according to Heidegger, nothing nothings' by a philosophy professor explaining the philosophy of Martin Heidegger for a student who takes the professor to be a reliable source with this regard. Such an utterance may cause the student to believe the content of this sentence as well. Still the student may *not* have the intuition that the sentence in question has a complete content. In other words, the sentence may not appear completely meaningful to the student despite his/her belief in its (complete or incomplete) content. Therefore, the cognitive relation is not sufficient for the intuition of the completeness of the content.[43]

1.8.2. Intuitions about the Identity of the Content[44]

Taking into account that we are concerned about competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers, the question, properly speaking, is this:

(Q2) How do we explain the intuition of competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers about the *identity* (i.e. sameness or difference) of the content of simple sentences containing empty names?

According to BT (in particular, following Braun's reply to the problems 7, 8, 9, and 10), a rational agent can believe a certain singular Russellian proposition, or a gappy proposition, under different propositional guises and so in different ways of believing. Consider:

(23) Santa Claus is nonexistent.

(24) Father Xmas is nonexistent.

(25) Superman is nonexistent.

According to BT (23), (24), and (25) all semantically express the same gappy proposition. This proposition can be represented by:

(23/24/25p) <___, nonexistence> [45]

Therefore, (23), (24), and (25) have the same content. However, it seems that (at least many, if not all) CRWC speakers (who know about the story of Santa Claus, Father Xmas, and Superman and know that there are no actual persons as Santa Claus, Father Xmas and Superman) have the intuition that (23) and (24) have the same content but (23) and (25) have different contents. So, the question is how to explain the intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the sameness of the content of (23) and (24) on the one hand and the difference in the contents of (23) and (25) on the other hand.

Responses and Rebuttals

Response 1

On behalf of BT, one may respond as follows. (23)-(25) all have the same content. CRWC speakers' intuition concerning the sameness of the content of (23) and (24) is correct but their intuition concerning the difference in the content of (23) and (25) is incorrect. The explanation of this incorrect intuition may go as follows: CRWC speakers judge that (23) and (25) have different contents because they are mistaken in evaluating the truth value of such sentences (or some utterances of them). In evaluating a sentence (or an utterance of it), a wide range of factors come into play. For example, which facts one takes to be relevant, what one takes their relevance to be, how well one recalls relevant background facts, how well one reasons about the impact these facts should have on her judgment, and any number of biases and the like: "In principle, errors may occur at any stage."[46] Therefore, since CRWC speakers are usually mistaken in evaluating (23) and (25), and similar sentences, they usually hold the incorrect intuition that they have different contents.

Rebuttal 1

The above response, however, dos not seem promising. CRWC speakers do not seem to be mistaken in evaluating (23) and (25) in the way suggested above: they do not assign *different* truth values to (23) and (25); CRWC speakers usually assign the *same* truth value to these sentences. In the contexts in which CRWC speakers intend to evaluate (23) and (25) as reports of the actual world, they seem to be more prone to take both sentences as true – after all, there are good reasons to think that in the actual world there is neither Santa Clause nor Superman. Hence, there is no divergence between the results of CRWC speakers' evaluations of (23) and (25) in such contexts. Also, in the contexts in which CRWC speakers intend to evaluate (23) and (25) as reports of their relevant mythical or fictional worlds, they seem to be more prone to take both sentences as false – after all, there are good reasons to think that according to the myth of Santa Claus, Santa Claus exists and according to the fiction of Superman, Superman exists. Hence, again, there is no divergence between the results of CRWC speakers' evaluations of (23) and (25) in such contexts. Therefore, in either case, CRWC speakers do not seem to assign different truth values to (23) and (25), mistakenly or not. Hence, the above response does not work.

Response 2

On behalf of Braun's view, one may respond as follows. (23)-(25) all have the same content. CRWC speakers' intuition concerning the sameness of the content of (23) and (24) is correct but their intuition concerning the difference in the content of (23) and (25) is incorrect. The explanation of this incorrect intuition, however, is not that CRWC speakers are mistaken in evaluating the truth value of (23) and (25), rather, it is that the gappy proposition expressed by these sentences, i.e. (23/24/25p), can be entertained and believed under different *propositional guises* (or in different ways). Entertaining and believing this proposition under a particular propositional guise may cause a CRWC speaker to think that (23) and (25) have different contents –though they do not. How the details of this explanation should be completed is not at stake; what is at stake is that the intuition of CRWC speakers about *the difference in the content* of sentences like (23) and (25) is explained in terms of *the difference in propositional guises* under which the single proposition expressed by these sentences, i.e. (23/24/25p), is entertained or believed.

Rebuttal 2

Though the above reply may seem promising, it is deliberately silent about an important point: how do we explain the intuition of CRWC speakers about the *sameness* of the content of (23) and (24)? If the intuition of CRWC speakers about the difference of the content of (23) and (25) is explained in terms of the difference in the corresponding propositional guises under which the content of these sentences is entertained, parity of reasoning suggests that, everything else being equal, the intuition of CRWC speakers about the sameness of the content of (23) and (24) implies the sameness of the corresponding propositional guises under which the content of these sentences is entertained. But then the question is how the above condition concerning the sameness of propositional guises can be satisfied. In particular, there are, at least, two questions: (i) How, for a *single* CRWC speaker, propositional guises are to be individuated to satisfy the above condition (i.e. the propositional guise under which the speaker entertains the content of (23) is to be the same as the propositional guise under which the speaker entertains the content of (24))? (ii) How, for *two different* CRWC speakers, propositional guises are to be individuated to satisfy the above condition (i.e. the propositional guise under which one entertains the content of (23) be the same as the propositional guise under which the other entertains the content of (24))?[47]

Recall that one principal claim of BT is that though (23) and (24) have the same content, different CRWC speakers may take this unique content under different propositional guises (and hence entertain, or believe, the content of these sentences in different ways) because propositional guises are more tightly connected to the psychology of speakers than the semantics of natural language; however, the above defense of BT, secures that for different utterances of (23) and (24) both by a single

CRWC speaker and different CRWC speakers, the propositional guise under which the content of these sentences is entertained should be the same. In particular, consider a plausible construal of BT according to which propositional guises are speaker's mental sentences. Then, since the mental sentence corresponding to the mental state of entertaining (23) seems to be, at least syntactically, different from the mental sentence corresponding to the mental state of entertaining (24), for both a singular CRWC speaker and different CRWC speakers, the above condition of the sameness of propositional guises does not satisfy. The problem, in fact, is more general and is not specific to the mental sentence construal of propositional guises. The general form of the problem is this: if propositional guises, as some psychological entities, are so fined grained and private that they may vary from utterance to utterance, over time and speakers, say with regard to (23) and (24), then they cannot explain the intuition of CRWC speakers about the *sameness* of the content of (23) and (24), or similar sentences – since the intuition in question is not variant to the same extent. On the other hand, if propositional guises vary exactly to the same extent as the intuition of CRWC speakers about the sameness and difference of the content of sentences like (23)-(25) varies, then propositional guises look more like Fregean senses and less like psychological entities. If so, then BT slips into a version of Neo-Fregeanism. In this case, then, BT does not provide a defense of Neo-Russellianism.

Response 3

On behalf of BT, one may reply as follows. The intuition of CRWC speakers about the difference in the content of sentences like (23) and (25) is explained in terms of difference in the *propositional guises* under which the single gappy proposition expressed by them is entertained. Also, it is correct that the intuition of CWRC speakers about the sameness of the content of sentences like (23) and (24) implies the sameness of the propositional guises under which the content of these sentences is entertained, for both a single speaker and different speakers. How the above conditions of sameness and difference of propositional guises can be satisfied without making propositional guises similar to Neo-Fregean senses is a separate issue. What BT requires is to postulate propositional guises as, first, entities distinct form the semantic content of sentences like (23)-(25), recall that their semantic content is a gappy proposition, and, second, as entities accounting for different ways of entertaining a single semantic content. Therefore, providing a complete account of propositional guises and demonstrating that they are not identical with Neo-Fregean senses are not necessary conditions for the success of BT. As long as propositional guises are postulated as separate entities from Neo-Fregean senses, even though we do not have a complete account of their nature, BT is not a Neo-Fregean theory and hence can be considered as a successful defense of Neo-Russellianism.

Rebuttal 3

Let us assume the above response is correct; namely, the intuition of CRWC speakers about the difference in the contents of simple sentences like (23) and (25), which contain genuinely *empty* names, is explained in terms of difference in the corresponding propositional guises and the intuition of CRWC speakers about the sameness of the content of simple sentences like (23) and (24), which contain genuinely *empty* names, implies the sameness of corresponding propositional guises (for different utterances of both a single speaker and different speakers). Moreover, let us assume that satisfying the above conditions does not make propositional guises similar to Neo-Fregean senses. Then, one may raise the following question: do propositional guises have the same kind of relation to similar intuitions about the content of simple sentences containing genuinely *referring* names? For example, consider:

(30) Hesperus exists.

(31) Phosphorus exists.

(32) Neptune exists.

CRWC speakers seem to have the intuition that (30) and (32) have different contents and (30) and (31) have the same content. The question, then, is this: Is the intuition of CRWC speakers about the difference in the contents of (30) and (32) explained in terms of the difference in corresponding propositional guises? And, does the intuition of CRWC speakers about the sameness of the content of (30) and (31) imply the sameness of corresponding propositional guises (for different utterances of both a single speaker and different speakers)?

Either answer to the above questions raises some concern. Let us first consider the 'yes' answer; namely, the intuition of CRWC speakers about the difference in the contents of (30) and (32) is explained in terms of difference in corresponding propositional guises and the intuition of CRWC speakers about the sameness of the content of (30) and (31) implies the sameness of corresponding propositional guises (for different utterances of both a single speaker and different speakers). The 'yes' answer assigns a *unified* role to propositional guises with regard to the intuition of CRWC speakers about the identity of the content of *both* simple sentences containing genuinely *empty* names and simple sentences containing genuinely *referring* names.

Nevertheless, there are some difficulties with the 'yes' answer; I mention three.

First, there does not seem to be independent and plausible reasons for such a reply. Recall that gappy propositions were not fine grained enough to account for the intuitions of CRWC speakers concerning the identity of the content; all sentences (23)-(25) semantically express one and only one gappy proposition when CRWC speakers do not have the similar intuition. But it is not the case for singular Russellian propositions; they perfectly match with the intuitions of CRWC speakers about the sameness and difference of the content, for example with regard to (30)-(32) (keep in mind that CRWC speakers know that Hesperus exists, Phosphorus exists, they are identical and Neptune is a not Hesperus). In other words, singular Russellian propositions are fined grained enough to explain the relevant intuitions of CRWC speakers. Therefore, the above reply, at least, raises the following question: if singular Russellian propositions are fine grained enough to explain the intuitions of CRWC speakers about the identity of the content, why do we not use them in the explanation of such intuitions?

Second, that the intuition of CRWC speakers about the difference in the contents of (30) and (32) is not explained in terms of singular Russellian propositions runs against one of the strongest reasons for the acceptance of such propositions in the first place. Recall that one of the most important reasons in favor of singular Russellian propositions is that they do account for our intuition concerning aboutness and what is said. As Braun (1993; 461) puts the point:

Our intuitions concerning *aboutness* and *what is said* are among the strongest motivations for the structured proposition theory. The proposition I express by uttering 'Bush is taller than Reagan' is about Bush, Reagan and the relation of being-taller-than. The structured proposition view recognizes this in a straightforward way, for on this view, Bush, Reagan, and the relation of being-taller-than are *constituents* of the proposition I express. Thus *what I say* is *about* those items.

If singular Russellian propositions account for our intuition, as CRWC speakers, concerning aboutness and what is said, it seems reasonable to conclude that they do account for our intuition concerning the *difference* in aboutness and what is said as well. But if singular Russellian propositions do account for our intuition concerning the difference in aboutness and what is said, then we also expect them to account for our intuition concerning the difference in the *content* – this only requires assuming some minimal relation between our intuition concerning what is said, on the one hand, and our intuition concerning the content on the other hand. Therefore, that they do not account for our intuition concerning the content runs against one of the most important reasons for their acceptance, i.e. that they account for our intuition concerning aboutness and what is said. [48]

Third, recall that, firstly, we assumed that propositional guises explain the intuition of CRWC speakers of the difference in the content of sentences like (23) and (25) (sentences containing genuinely empty names). Then, secondly, we assumed that propositional guises are identical if CRWC speakers hold the intuition that the content of sentences like (23) and (24) are identical. Moreover, we assumed that satisfying the above conditions does not make propositional guises similar to Neo-Fregean senses. Now, in addition, we want to assume that propositional guises satisfy the same condition in the case of sentences containing genuinely referring names. This makes the threat of slipping into a Neo-Fregean theory more serious. By demanding propositional guises to satisfy the above conditions of identity (i.e. sameness and difference) and ascribing such a general and unified explanatory role to them, both in cases of referring names and genuinely empty names, they seem very similar to Neo-Fregean senses.

Nevertheless, one may argue that propositional guises, though very similar to Neo-Fregean senses, still are not constituents of semantic contents and hence should not be accounted for within semantics, contra Neo-Fregean senses. If so, then BT, or any other theory committed to propositional guises, does not slip into a version of Neo-Fregeanism.[49] Bearing in mind that Braun has argued against the Pragmatic Explanation View (see chapter 3), the above defense suggests that propositional guises should not be accounted for within semantics or pragmatics. This line of reasoning, however, encounters a serious problem: why should propositional guises not be accounted for within semantics or pragmatics? On the contrary, two considerations, even acknowledged by BT, support the view that propositional guises should be accounted for within either semantics or pragmatics. First, the existence and identity conditions of propositional guises are tightly connected to the existence and identity conditions of corresponding *sentences* in natural language. For a single proposition to be entertained under a specific propositional guise it is necessary that that proposition is expressed by a specific sentence of natural language, not by any other sentence. This seems to suggest that propositional guises are more likely to be accounted for as linguistic phenomena, rather than psychological, and hence should be accounted for within either semantics or pragmatics. Second, given that propositional guises have been assigned a general and unified explanatory role with regard to the intuitions of content and truth, propositional guises seem to provide the *proper explanation* for the intuition of CRWC speakers about the content and truth of *what is said*. Leaving aside the dispute regarding semantics-pragmatics boundary, such kind of explanation is supposed to be provided within either semantics or pragmatics. Therefore, if propositional guises are successful in satisfying their unified explanatory role, they are more likely to be accounted for within either semantics or pragmatics.

Now consider the 'no' answer to the above question; namely, the intuition of CRWC speakers about the difference in the contents of (30) and (32) is *not* explained in terms of the difference in corresponding propositional guises and the intuition of CRWC speakers about the sameness of the content of (30) and (31) does *not* imply the sameness of corresponding propositional guises (for different utterances of both a single speaker and different speakers).

This reply also raises a serious concern. Since there is no obvious syntactical or grammatical difference between genuinely empty and genuinely referring names, it seems that the intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the difference in the content of sentences containing *either* kind of proper names should be explained in *one way*. Also, it seems that the intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the sameness of the content of sentences containing *either* kind of proper names should have the same kind of consequences for the corresponding propositional guises. In other words, there is no independent and plausible reason to explain the intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the difference in the content of sentences containing genuinely empty names, like (23) and (25), in one way, i.e. in terms of propositional guises, and the similar intuition of the same speakers with regard to sentences containing genuinely referring names, like (30) and (32), in another way, i.e. *not* in terms of propositional guises, for example in terms of the objects which are the constituents of singular Russellian propositions.

I conclude that ascribing a general and uniform explanatory role to propositional guises with regard to the intuitions in question requires us to ascribe a general and uniform identity (sameness and difference) conditions to them regardless of the psychology of CRWC speakers. As a result, either BT slips into a version of Neo-Fregeanism or is incomplete – since, in the latter case, BT needs to provide a complete account of propositional guises demonstrating that they are significantly different from Neo-Fregean senses and simultaneously satisfying all the required conditions. And ascribing a dual explanatory role to propositional guises requires BT to provide independent and plausible reasons for doing this. In the absence of any such independent and plausible reason, in turn, this strategy seems unjustified. Therefore, either way, it does not seem to be an obvious matter how BT accounts for the intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the identity (sameness and difference) of the content. Hence, it does not seem to be an obvious matter how BT answers (Q2).

1.8.3. Intuitions about the Informativeness (of the Content)

Taking into account that we are concerned about competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers, the question, properly speaking, is this:

(Q3) How do we explain the intuition of competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers about the *informativeness* (of the content) of simple sentences containing empty names?

Consider:

(33) Santa Claus is Santa Claus.

(34) Santa Claus is Père Noël.[50]

and a CRWC speaker. Such a speaker uses the names 'Santa Claus' and 'Père Noël' correctly, since she is competent; she does not have inconsistent beliefs about Santa Claus or Père Noël, since she is rational; she is aware of the story/myth of Santa Claus as is widely popular in English speaking countries and the story/myth of Père Noël as is widely popular in French speaking countries, since she is well-informed; and finally, she is careful about the judgments she makes, since she is contemplative. Moreover, as a plausible assumption, let us assume that the stories/myths of Santa Claus and Père Noël have the same origin; both stories/myths have been made around the same character, for example, a Turkish religious man whose real name was 'Saint Nicholas'. Suppose that Saint Nicholas' properties were considerably different from the properties ascribed to Santa Claus or Père Noël. And finally assume that CRWC speakers are informed that the stories/myths of Santa Claus and Père Noël have the same origin; in other words, CRWC speakers are informed that both stories/myths have been made around Saint Nicholas.

In the above scenario, it seems that CRWC speakers have different intuitions with regard to the informativeness of (33) and (34): while (33) does not seem to be informative, if true, (34) seems to be informative, if true. Nevertheless, according to BT, (33) and (34) have the same semantic content. The question, then, is how does BT account for the intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the difference in informativeness of (33) and (34)?

Responses and Rebuttals

Response 1

The above problem is the same as the problem of apparent difference in cognitive significance for Braun's semantics of empty names, PM7, and the problem of apparent difference in cognitive significance for Millianism, PM9. Therefore, it can be answered in the same way. The sketch of a reply goes like this.

Recall the following case, (PM9):

(19) Hesperus is Hesperus.

(20) Hesperus is Phosphorus.

One may think that (19) is not informative and (20) is informative, though (19) and (20) semantically express the same singular Russellian proposition. This is because the singular proposition expressed by (19) and (20) can be entertained under different propositional guises, for instance a purely Hesperus-ish and a mixed Hesperus-Phosphorus-ish propositional guise. Taking the proposition under the former propositional guise may dispose the speaker to believe that (19) is true and under the latter propositional guise may dispose the speaker to believe that (20) is false. Therefore, such a speaker may believe both that proposition and its negation. Hence, such a speaker may have different intuitions concerning the informativeness of (19) and (20) respectively.

The same story goes with (33) and (34). (33) and (34) have the same semantic content that can be represented by:

(33/34p) <___, Is-Identical-With, ___>

A CRWC speaker, however, may *entertain* (33) and (34) under *different propositional guises*, say a purely Santa-Claus-ish and a mixed Santa-Claus- Père-Noël-ish. On the one hand, Taking (33/34p) under a purely Santa-Claus-ish propositional guise may dispose the speaker to believe that (33) is true. On the other hand, taking (33/34p) under a mixed Santa-Claus-Père-Noël-ish propositional guise may dispose the speaker to believe that (34) is false. Therefore, such a CRWC speaker may believe both (33/34p) and its negation under suitably different propositional guises (and hence in suitably different ways of believing). Hence, such a speaker may have different intuitions concerning the informativeness of (33) and (34) respectively.[51]

Rebuttal 1

In the case of referring names, like 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus', BT explains the intuition concerning the difference in cognitive significance of (19) and (20) in terms of different beliefs about the truth values of (19) and (20). A crucial assumption, in this case, is that the speaker may have different beliefs about the truth values of (19) and (20): when she may believe that (19) is true, she may believe that (20) is false. This explains her different intuitions about the cognitive significance of (19) and (20) respectively. This line of reasoning implicitly assumes that the speaker in question is either not well informed about Hesperus and Phosphorus or (if well-informed) not contemplative – since she cannot see the sameness of the truth conditions of (19) and (20). In the case of (genuinely) empty names, however, speakers are CRWC; in particular, they are well informed about Santa Claus and Père Noël; they are aware of both stories/myths and know that neither character actually exists. Moreover, they are (rational and) contemplative; they are able to make necessary entailments and have enough time to do so. Under these conditions, it seems that BT's reply to PM9 cannot legitimately be duplicated as a response to (Q3) since CRWC speakers may not have different beliefs about the truth values of (33) and (34) when, at the same time, they have different intuitions about the informativeness of (33) and (34).

In other words, the above response explains the intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the difference in informativeness of (33) and (34) in terms of different beliefs concerning the truth value of (33) and (34). This, after all, does not seem to be a plausible assumption. CRWC speakers may have the intuition of the difference in informativeness of (33) and (34), when they do not have different beliefs concerning the truth value of (33) and (34). It seems perfectly plausible to assume that a CRWC speaker believes that (33) is not informative and (34) is informative and at the same time believes that both (33) and (34) are true, or withhold any belief about the truth conditions of these sentences. Therefore, since the intuition concerning the difference in informativeness of (33) and (34) does not coincide with different beliefs concerning the truth values of (33) and (34), the latter cannot properly explain the former.

Response 2

(33) and (34) have the same semantic content, and hence semantically express the same information. However, (33) and (34) differ in what they pragmatically implicate; when (34) pragmatically implicate a proposition that is informative, if true, (33) does not. CRWC speakers have the intuition that (34) is informative, if true, since they are mistaken about the semantic content of (34); in fact, they take what is pragmatically implicated by (34) as its semantic content and then since the latter is informative, they come to think that (34) is informative – when it is not. Since (33) does not exhibit the similar phenomenon, or CRWC speakers do not make the similar mistake, CRWC do not think that (33) is informative.

Rebuttal 2

The above response has two major problems: first, it does not fit with BT's overall strategy, and second, it does not seem to be a complete reply.

The above response does not fit with BT's overall strategy since Braun has criticized pragmatic approaches to the similar problem with regard to referring names, PM9, extensively – see Braun (1998; 2002). If pragmatic approaches to this issue are not accepted by BT with regard to referring names, it seems reasonable to assume that they should not be accepted by BT with regard to empty names as well.

The above response is not complete either. To make it justified, one needs to first indicate what proposition is pragmatically implicated by (34), or any other sentence like it, and second whether such proposition satisfies the general conditions required for implicated propositions. Neither task has been done – more importantly, neither task seems easily doable (as I will argue in chapter 3). Therefore, the above response is incomplete.

1.8.4. Intuitions about the Truth (of the Content) [52]

Taking into account that we are concerned about competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers, the question, properly speaking, is this:

(Q4) How do we explain the intuition of competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers about the *truth* (of the content) of simple sentences containing empty names?

Consider:

(35) Le Verrier was thinking of Vulcan.

(36) Le Verrier was looking for Vulcan.

According to BT, (35) and (36) semantically express atomic gappy propositions. These propositions can be represented respectively by:

(35p) <Le Verrier, thinking-of, ___>

(36p) <Le Verrier, looking-for, ___>

But according to BT, all *atomic* gappy propositions are false, or according to a close view to BT, all atomic gappy propositions lack truth value. Hence (35) and (36) are both false, or neither true nor false. However, it seems that (at least many, if not all) CRWC speakers have the intuition that (35) and (36) are true. Therefore, the question is this: how to explain the intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the truth of (35) and (36).

Responses and Rebuttals

Response 1

In defense of BT, one may respond as follows. CRWC speakers' intuitions concerning the truth of (35) and (36) are mistaken; (35) and (36) express (atomic) gappy propositions that are either false or truth-value-less. The explanation of why CRWC speakers have such a mistaken intuition about the truth of (35) and (36) is simple: they *believe* the gappy propositions expressed by these sentences. And they believe these gappy propositions since they have *good reasons* to do that. Therefore, because they believe these gappy propositions and are inclined to think that what they believe is true, they think that (35) and (36) are true – though they are not.

Rebuttal 1

There are three issues with the above response. First, that (35) and (36) are false runs against the best of our *epistemological* evidence. Second, that there are good reasons to believe gappy propositions – not the content of (35) and (36) – is problematic. And third, if they are good reasons to believe gappy propositions, I will argue that, there are *good reasons* to believe that BT is not correct. Here are these issues in order.

First. Believing that (35) and (36) are true seems to be based on the best of our epistemological evidence. Evidence like Le Verrier's attempt to develop a coherent theory about Vulcan, calculating its orbit and etc. strongly suggest that (35) is true. Evidence like Le Verrier's attempt to observe Vulcan, taking some photographs of it and etc. strongly suggests that (36) is true. Given that there is such evidence, we are rationally entitled to believe that (35) and (36) are true, as our epistemological evidence in similar cases indicates. Therefore, rejecting the truth of (35) and (36) does not seem to be epistemologically warranted.

Second. It seems correct that CRWC speakers have good reasons to believe the content of (35) and (36); however, it does not imply that CRWC speakers have good reasons to believe *the gappy propositions* postulated by BT as the semantic content of these sentences. Here is the argument tentatively. Consider evidence that might be counted as good reasons for believing *the content of*, say, (36) by a CRWC speaker. There are two reasons that this evidence does not typically provide good reasons for believing (36/p). (i) Such evidence typically provides good reasons for believing some *descriptive* propositions like Le Verrier was trying to observe such and such planet, or something along this line. In particular, it seems that the relevant evidence we are concerned with *only* supports such descriptive propositions. Though these descriptive descriptions might be very close to (36p) in content, they are not gappy propositions. Therefore, such evidence does not support (36p), or any other gappy propositions; rather, it supports some, probably closely relevant, descriptive propositions. (ii) For evidence to be a good reason for a CRWC speaker to believe (36p), both the evidence and (36p) should be available to the CRWC speaker. However, according to BT, gappy propositions are not transparent; one may believe a gappy proposition without recognizing that the content of his/her belief is a gappy proposition. Therefore, a CRWC speaker may believe (36p) without recognizing that the content of his/her belief is a gappy proposition. Hence, (36p) is not introspectively available to the speaker. Under these conditions, it is not obvious how the speaker may take the relevant evidence as good reasons *for* (36p), that is not introspectively available to him/her. (The above considerations lead to further issues with regard to the epistemology of gappy propositions to which I will come back later on).

And third, if there are good reasons to believe gappy propositions, then there are good reasons to believe that BT is not true. The argument goes like this. Assume that there are good reasons to believe a gappy proposition, say (36p). If there are good reasons to believe P, then there are good reasons to believe that P is true. Therefore, since there are good reasons to believe (36p), by assumption, then there are good reasons to believe that (36p) is *true*. If there are good reasons to believe that ϕ and ϕ entails that ψ is not true, and we accept the entailment, then there are good reasons to believe that ψ is not true. Therefore, since there are good reasons to believe that (36p) is true, and the truth of (36p), as an atomic gappy proposition, entails that BT is not correct (recall that according to BT all atomic gappy propositions are false), given that we accept the entailment,[53] then there are good reasons to believe that BT is not correct.[54]

Response 2

In defense of BT, one may respond as follows. The intuition of CRWC speakers concerning the truth of (35) and (36) is not mistaken; (35) and (36) express singular Russellian propositions and both are true. Recall that according to BT (particularly Braun's semantics of empty names), our use of the so-called 'empty' names are indeterminate: some uses are genuinely empty and some are not. Specifically, some of our uses of empty names actually refer to some abstract objects. Therefore, it can be argued that the uses of 'Vulcan' in (35) and (36) are among those uses which actually refer to the abstract object Vulcan. Hence, (35) and (36) both express singular Russellian propositions that contain the abstract object Vulcan as their constituent. Given the epistemological evidence we have, then, it can be argued that (35) and (36) are both true.

Rebuttal 2

This response does not seem promising for three reasons. First, it entails the truth of some other sentences that do not seem to be true. Second, epistemological evidence does not support the truth of the above interpretations of (35) and (36). And third, it is easy to make examples in which 'Vulcan' is a *genuinely* empty name and hence the above reply does not work. Here are these three reasons in more detail.

First, the above response has some odd consequences. If (35) and (36) are true and the name 'Vulcan' as used therein refers to the abstract object Vulcan, then the following are true as well:

(37) Le Verrier was thinking of an abstract object.

(38) Le Verrier was looking for an abstract object.

(37) may not seem problematic – though it might be said that Le Verrier was not thinking *of* an abstract object, rather he was thinking *through* an abstract object (or by means of an abstract object). (38), however, seems very odd. Le Verrier would definitely have rejected (38) if he had been asked. The problem is not only (38); there are many other atomic sentences with transitive intentional verbs that produce the same kind of difficulty. That (38) is true, for example, implies that CRWC speakers are seriously confused about the object of their intentional attitudes; they may think that they wish to see a man when they really wish to see an abstract object or they may think that they look for a fountain when they really look for an abstract object, etc. Admittedly, CRWC speakers might be to some degree mistaken about the object of their attitudes. Nevertheless, to accept that sentences like (38) are true we need to ascribe a much deeper confusion to CRWC speaker. Ascribing such a deep confusion to CRWC speakers requires some independent and strong pieces of evidence. In the absence of such pieces of evidence, such an ascription is not justified.

Second, even if we accept that people are deeply confused about the object of their intentional attitudes, there is a serious epistemological problem concerning the evidence supporting the content of sentences like (38). No piece of evidence available to *us*, nor to Le Verrier, indicates that he was looking for an abstract object. If Le Verrier was looking for an abstract object, he would not try to observe it – given that abstract objects are not observable and Le Verrier knew this. If Le Verrier was looking for an abstract object, he would not try to calculate its orbit – given that abstract objects do not have orbit in the sense that Le Verrier was calculating for Vulcan and Le Verrier knew this, and etc. These pieces of evidence all indicate that *we* are rationally entitled to reject (38) – regardless of Le Verrier's own view about (38). The same goes for similar sentences.

Third, and more importantly, it is easy to build cases like (35) and (36) in which the name is genuinely empty even according to BT. Recall that according BT (particularly Braun's semantics of empty names), theorizers' uses of empty names, at least in some cases, do not refer to anything, even the abstract objects created by their own act of theorizing (Braun, 2005, 615) – this was a significant difference between Braun's view and Salmon's. Hence, Le Verrier's uses of 'Vulcan' do not refer to anything according to BT. Now, instead of (35) and (36), consider tokens of the following sentences uttered by Le Verrier:

(39) I am thinking of Vulcan.

(40) I am looking for Vulcan.

'Vulcan' as used in (39) and (40) is a genuinely empty name. Therefore, the above response does not work in this case. Hence, the above reply does not work in general.

§1.9. The Fourth Set of Problems: Internal Problems for Braun's Theory

Recall that I called Braun's semantics of empty names together with Braun's theory of understanding sentences 'BT'. In what follows I put forward four new problems for BT. These issues do not deal with different intuitions CRWC speakers may have about the content of sentences containing genuinely empty names. Rather, in a nutshell, they address some prima facie implausible consequences of BT (9.1 and 9.2) and some problems with regard to the epistemology and semantics of gappy propositions (9.3 and 9.4). Here are these problems.

1.9.1. The Problem of Not Believing

The problem of not believing arises from the semantic analysis of propositional attitude sentences according to BT. The required truth condition for belief report sentences makes *not believing* too difficult. I provide two reasons for this. First, according to a plausible construal of BT, the truth condition of a negative belief report sentence, a sentence of the form 'a does not believe that S', contains a *universal quantifier* over propositional guises. This makes the truth of the negative belief report sentences as difficult as the satisfaction of the universal quantifier over propositional guises. Second, BT violates some prima facie plausible rules concerning the inference of not believing from believing not, even for competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers. In what follows, I explain the semantic analysis of belief report sentences according to BT and then show how the required truth condition for belief report sentences raises the above concerns about not believing.

Assume that there are different propositional guises, and hence different ways, under which a single proposition can be entertained or believed as BT claims. A speaker can believe a single "proposition in one of these ways while failing to believe it in another way" (Braun, 1998, 572). Let me introduce a belief report sentence, in general, as follows:

(41) *a* believes that S.

(When '*a*' is substituted by a referring proper name and 'S' with a suitable English sentence). For example, recall:

(17) Hesperus is visible in the evening.

(18) Phosphorus is visible in the evening.

The following belief report sentences can be made out of (17) and (18):

(21) Hammurabi believes that Hesperus is visible in the evening.

(22) Hammurabi believes that Phosphorus is visible in the evening.

According to Neo-Russellianism, (17) and (18) express the same proposition, (17/18p):

(17/18p) <Venus, being-visible-in-the-evening>

And (21) and (22) also express the same proposition, (21/22p):

(21/22p) <Hammurabi, *BEL*, <Venus, being-visible-in-the-evening>>

Braun's words above might be misleading. It seems that, for example, Hammurabi can believe (17/18p) under one propositional guise, when it is expressed by (17), while failing to believe (17/18p) under another propositional guise, when it is expressed by (18). This may lead one to think that (21) is true and (22) is false. But (21) and (22) have the same semantic content and hence the same truth value. Put differently, according to Neo-Russellianism (iv) and (v), the semantic content of a belief report sentence, (41), consists of the semantic content of '*a*', 'believes', and 'that S' which in turn are the referent of '*a*', the binary relation *BEL*, and the Russellian proposition semantically expressed by 'S'. Nowhere in this semantic analysis does a way of believing or a propositional guise appear. Therefore, one may think that, if Hammurabi, for example, can believe the content of (17) in one way of believing, (21) would be true, and if Hammurabi fails to believe the content of (18) in a different way of believing, (22) would be false. However, this makes BT contradictory; for according to Neo-Russellianism, (21) and (22) cannot differ in semantic content and hence cannot differ in truth value. Therefore, Braun's words should not be taken this way.

The above problem is rooted in a tension between two different requirements. On the one hand, ways of believing or propositional guises should be related to the semantics of belief report sentences – otherwise, their role in believing or disbelieving a single proposition cannot be mirrored in the semantics of belief report sentences and the truth value of belief report sentences would absolutely be independent of propositional guises . On the other hand, no specific way of believing or propositional guise can appear in the semantic content of belief report sentences – otherwise BT slips into a version of Neo-Fregeanism (in this case, BT should give up on Neo-Russellianism, either (i), i.e. Millianism, or (iv), the Russellian view about the semantic content of 'that'-clauses, or (v), the Russellian view about the semantic content of 'believes'). Therefore, the question is this: how are propositional guises related to the semantics of belief report sentences? Braun's favorite reply goes like this.[55] Propositional guises are related to the *truth conditions*, rather than the semantic content, of belief report sentences. In particular, an existential quantifier over propositional guises appears in the truth condition of belief report sentences as follows:

(42) ⌜*a* believes that S⌝ is true if and only if *there is* a propositional guise *g* such that *a* holds the *BEL* relation to the proposition expressed by 'S' under *g*.

There are different propositional guises, and hence different ways, under which a single proposition can be entertained or believed. However, failing to believe a single proposition under a particular propositional guise, per se, does not make the relevant belief report sentence false. For instance, that Hammurabi fails to believe (17/18p) under a Phosphorous-ish propositional guise does not make (22) false. In fact, (22), i.e. 'Hammurabi believes that Phosphorus is visible in the evening', is true even when Hammurabi fails to believe the content of 'Phosphorus is visible in the evening' under a Phosphorus-ish propositional guise since there *is* a propositional guise, i.e. the Hesperus-ish propositional guise, under which Hammurabi believes this content. The problem of not believing arises from (42). (42) makes not believing too difficult. Here I present two pieces of evidence for this.

The first piece of evidence is this. Let me introduce a *negative* belief report sentence, in general, as follows:

(43) *a* does not believe that S.

The same restrictions apply as in (41).[56] Following (42), the truth condition of (43) is:

(44) ⌜*a* does not believe that S⌝ is true if and only if *for any* propositional guise *g*,
a does not hold the *BEL* relation to the proposition expressed by 'S' under *g*.

The right hand side of (44) contains a universal quantifier over propositional guises. Therefore, negative belief report sentences, sentences of the form of not believing, are as unlikely to be true as the universal quantifier over propositional guises is to be satisfied. Neo-Fregean theories, as alternative theories, do not have such a problem; they let *specific* Neo-Fregean Senses directly contribute into the semantic content of belief report sentences and their negation. This, in turn, lets specific Neo-Fregean Senses, or some functions of them, appear in the truth conditions of belief report sentences and their negations. In other words, no universal quantifier over Neo-Fregean Senses appears in the semantic analysis of the negative belief report sentences.

The second piece of evidence is this. Let me introduce a *disbelief* report sentence, in general, as follows:

(45) *a* believes that not S.

The same restrictions apply as in (41)).[57] The rule we are concerned with is this:

(45) *a* believes that not S.

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(43) *a* does not believe that S.

In other words, from a disbelief report sentence, a sentence of the form of *believing not*, a negative belief report sentence, a sentence of the form of *not believing*, can be inferred. Here is a point worth mentioning. The above rule is about the use of sentences like (45) and (43) in *natural language*; in particular, as *competent* and *rational* speakers use such sentences in natural language. BT violates this rule by giving the above truth conditions (42) and (44). There might be a propositional guise under which *a* believes the content of 'not S', so (45) is true, and a different propositional guise under which *a* believes the content of 'S', so '*a* believes that S' is true and hence (43) is false. Therefore the above rule is not truth-preserving, and hence does not hold. However, the linguistic practice of competent and rational speakers accords with the above rule. For example, the following inference seems valid:

(46) Hammurabi believes that Phosphorus is *not* visible in the evening.

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(47) Hammurabi does *not* believe that Phosphorus is visible in the evening.

The same story goes with similar cases. Therefore, since BT violates the above mentioned rule of inference, it makes not believing too difficult.

In reply, it might be said that the rule of inference under discussion is not truth-preserving in the first place and hence the linguistic practice of competent and rational speakers, given that it accords with this rule of inference, is fallacious. That the rule of inference is not truth-preserving can in turn be justified as follows. Consider any pair of coextensive predicates: 'is water' and 'is H2O', for instance. A competent and rational speaker may not know about the co-extensionality of the two predicates. Therefore, she may believe that this stuff is water and at the same time she may believe that this stuff is *not* H2O. If the rule of inference were truth-preserving, from the latter believing-not claim, the following not-believing claim could be inferred: she does *not* believe that this stuff is H2O. But this renders *our* formulation of the speaker's beliefs contradictory: on the one hand, by assumption, she believes that this stuff is water and on the other hand, as a result of acknowledging the above-mentioned rule of inference, she does not believe that this stuff is H2O. (It should be noted that the problem is not that the competent and rational speaker has contradictory beliefs – though this may pose some problem, the consensus seems to be that all competent and rational speakers, in some sense or another, have some contradictory beliefs – the problem, rather, is that *our* formulation of the competent and rational speaker's beliefs is contradictory). By reductio, then, it can be concluded that the rule of inference is not truth-preserving and hence BT is correct in disallowing the rule.[58]

Nevertheless, the above defense from BT is not successful. The problem with this defense of BT is this: given the above scenario, the sentences 'she believes that this stuff is water' and 'she does not believe that this stuff is H2O' are not contradictory and hence no contradiction occurs in our formulation of the competent and rational speaker's beliefs by applying the rule of inference in question. Here is why the above two sentences, and similar sentences only differing in co-extensive predicates, are not contradictory in general. According to both Neo-Fregeans and Neo-Russellians, co-extensiveness, in most cases, is not a sufficient condition for the sameness of semantic content. Therefore, even though 'is water' and 'is H2O' are co-extensive, these two predicates may, and actually do, not have the same semantic content. Assuming a proper version of the Principle of Compositionality, it follows that the semantic content of 'she believes that this stuff is water' is different from the semantic content of 'she believes that this stuff is H2O' and hence the negation of the latter does not contradict the former. To build up on this point, let me briefly justify why according to both Neo-Fregeans and Neo-Russellians, co-extensiveness is not a sufficient condition for having the same semantic content. According to Neo-Fregeans, the semantic content of a predicate is its Neo-Fregean sense which is different from the extension of that predicate. Therefore, having the same extension is different from, and is not a sufficient condition for, having the same semantic content. Therefore, though 'is water' and 'is H2O' are co-extensive, they differ in semantic content since their Neo-Fregean senses are different. According to Neo-Russellians, the semantic content of a simple predicate like 'is water' and the semantic content of a complex predicate like 'is H2O' (in its intended interpretation) are different. Some like Jeffrey King (1995; 1996; 1998) and Mark Richard (1993; 2001) hold that such natural kind predicates have different semantic contents though they express the same property (according to this view, natural kinds are identified with properties and therefore natural kind predicates that express the same property designate the same natural kind). Others like Soames (2002; Ch. 10) hold that not only such natural kind predicates have different semantic contents but also compound natural kind predicates have semantic contents that are different from the natural kinds they designate (according this view, natural kinds are not identified with properties). Either way, the semantic contents of 'is water' and 'is H2O', and similar cases, are not identical. Hence co-extensiveness is not a sufficient condition for having the same semantic content.

In fact, the problem with BT is more serious than only disallowing the rule of inference in question in *some cases*. Let us consider two kinds of competent and rational speakers, with regard to a specific object: those not-well-informed and those well-informed. For example, Hammurabi, who does not know that Hesperus is Phosphorus, is not-well-informed, and Stephen Hawking, who knows Hesperus is Phosphoru~~s and~~ that Phosphorus is a planet, not a star, is well-informed. For both kinds of speakers, or believers, the rule of inference seems valid in *natural language*. To repeat, for example consider:

(46) Hammurabi believes that Phosphorus is *not* visible in the evening.

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(47) Hammurabi does *not* believe that Phosphorus is visible in the evening.

Or:

(48) Stephen Hawking believes that Phosphorus is *not* a star.

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(49) Stephen Hawking does *not* believe that Phosphorus is a star.

Even if one is willing to reject the above rule for not-well-informed speakers, or believers, and hence the inference from (46) to (47), it seems highly implausible to reject the above rule for well-informed speakers, or believers, and hence the inference from (48) to (49). In fact, it can plausibly be argued that even Neo-Russellians do not need to reject the above rule of inference for well-informed speakers. However, *BT needs to reject the above rule of inference for well-informed speakers in the case of sentences contain genuinely empty names*. The argument goes like this. Consider, for instance, a (competent, rational) well-informed (and contemplative) speaker who knows about Santa Claus, Vulcan (the hypothetical planet introduced by Le Verrier), and the nonexistence of both. Let us call this speaker, 'Jones'. Jones, nevertheless, may have different beliefs about Santa Claus and Vulcan: he may believe that Santa Claus is famous while Vulcan is not, for example. Under this circumstance, BT requires us to reject the following inference:

(50) Jones believes that Vulcan is *not* famous.

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(51) Jones does *not* believe that Vulcan is famous.

(51) cannot be inferred from (50), since otherwise BT entails a contradiction. In particular, (51) contradicts 'Jones believes that Santa Claus is famous', keep in mind that 'Vulcan' and 'Santa Claus' have the same semantic content according to BT. To conclude, violating the above rule of inference for *well-informed speakers* provides the second piece of evidence that BT makes not believing too difficult.

1.9.2. The Problem of Believing Contradictions

According to BT, a competent and rational speaker may believe a proposition and the negation of that proposition under different propositional guises. This, however, does not imply that the speaker believes and *does not* believe a single proposition simultaneously – otherwise, BT would be inconsistent. BT, as we observed above, may save itself from inconsistency by making *not believing* too difficult – not a low price when *well-informed* speakers are considered. However, there is a further issue for BT with this regard: *widely ascribing inconsistent* beliefs to competent and rational speakers. BT justifies this by appeal to propositional guises (inconsistent propositions might be believed under different propositional guises). In what follows, I explain why this strategy, i.e. widely ascribing inconsistent beliefs to competent and rational speakers, does not seem promising, at least in the cases under question.

Again, let us consider the cases of not-well-informed and well-informed (competent and rational) speakers separately.

First, consider Hammurabi as a not-well-informed speaker concerning Hesperus and Phosphorus. BT can accept both of the following:

(21) Hammurabi believes that Hesperus is visible in the evening.

(46) Hammurabi believes that Phosphorus is not visible in the evening.

Thereby, BT describes Hammurabi, who is a competent and rational speaker, as a person who believes contradictory propositions. BT explains this phenomenon by appeal to propositional guises: under one propositional guise Hammurabi believes the proposition expressed by 'Hesperus is visible in the evening' and under a suitably different propositional guise he believes the negation of the very same proposition. Therefore, believing contradictory propositions does not threat Hammurabi's rationality.

The above explanation, however, seems problematic. Admittedly, there are some cases in which competent and rational speakers have contradictory propositions among theirs beliefs. Nevertheless, the above case does not seem to be among such cases. The significant point about Hammurabi is that he is only *not* well-informed. Hammurabi does not have the information that Hesperus is Phosphorus. He lacks information. Lack of information is not the same as believing a contradiction. Hammurabi is rational enough to avoid believing a contradiction; he is only not informed that Hesperus is Phosphorus. BT's explanation, however, misrepresents a case of lack of information as a case of believing a contradiction when there is some alternative way of describing Hammurabi's beliefs. In fact, it seems more natural to accept (47) instead of (46):

(47) Hammurabi does *not* believe that Phosphorus is visible in the evening.

Thereby, Hammurabi's lack of information about the identity of Hesperus and Phosphorus explains Hammurabi's lack of belief in the content of 'Phosphorus is visible in the evening' – though he believes the content of 'Hesperus is visible in the evening'. This alternative way, however, makes BT inconsistent, as I explained above. Therefore, BT ascribes inconsistent beliefs to competent, rational, but not well-informed speakers, to save itself from inconsistency. But, if BT is correct, we should describe *all similar cases* of lack of information as cases of believing contradictions. This does not seem to be a low price and requires some strong and independent pieces of evidence – independent from BT.

Now, consider the case of Jones. Jones is a competent, rational, *well-informed*, and contemplative speaker. He knows about Santa Claus, Vulcan, and the nonexistence of both. According to BT, both of the following can be true:

(52) Jones believes that Santa Claus is famous.

(50) Jones believes that Vulcan is not famous.

BT offers the same explanation as in the case of Hammurabi above – recall that BT replies to problems 7 and 8 in the same way as to problems 9 and 10. However, this time, ascribing inconsistent beliefs to Jones is more difficult. In other words, describing Jones, who is a competent, rational, *well-informed*, and contemplative, as a person who believes contradictory propositions seems highly implausible. It seems that the price of BT, at least partly, is to describe a vast majority of competent and rational speakers as believing contradictory propositions when they are *neither irrational nor lack information*. This is not a low price and requires some *strong and independent* pieces of evidence – independent from BT.

1.9.3. The Problem of Believing Gappy Propositions

According to BT, a competent and rational speaker can believe a gappy proposition since she can entertain and believe that proposition without recognizing its gappiness. Recall that Le Verrier may believe the content of 'Vulcan exists', though this content is gappy and false. However, that a competent and rational speaker may not recognize the gappiness of a specific proposition does not explain why the speaker, e.g. Le Verrier, *actually* believes that gappy proposition. That gappy propositions are non-transparent (under some propositional guises) only explains that if there is no other problem, it is *possible* for a competent and rational speaker to believe them; this by no means explains why competent and rational speakers *actually* do believe them. Therefore, BT requires an explanation for this latter phenomenon.

BT offers the following explanation (Braun; 2005, 608):

> Twin You can rationally believe the atomic gappy proposition that he or she would express with the sentence 'Napoleon was a general' [assume that the proposition expressed by this sentence in Twin Earth is in fact a gappy proposition]. Le Verrier can rationally believe the atomic gappy proposition that Vulcan exists. Moreover, these agents can have *good reasons* for believing these propositions, even if they lack truth value [Braun here assumes that atomic gappy propositions are truth valueless, though this is not his view]. Twin You has the testimony of history teachers and textbooks. Le Verrier has his calculations, his beliefs about the masses of Mercury and the Sun, his well-confirmed beliefs in Newton's laws, and so on.

This explanation, however, does not properly match with BT. Consider the example of Le Verrier's evidence for his belief in the existence of Vulcan. Le Verrier's calculation is a good reason for believing the proposition that there is a planet between Mercury and the Sun with such and such characteristics (or something along this line), but Le Verrier's calculation is *not* a *good reason* for believing the *gappy proposition* expressed by 'Vulcan exists' according to BT. Le Verrier's calculation does not support a defective proposition whose key constituent is missing. If it does support any proposition, that proposition seems more likely to be a descriptive proposition. Likewise, Twin You's testimony of history teachers and textbooks is a good reason for believing the proposition that there was a general with such and such characteristics (or something along this), but Twin You's testimony is *not* a *good reason* for believing the gappy proposition expressed by 'Napoleon was a general' according to BT. Again, Twin You's testimony of history teachers and textbooks do not support a defective proposition whose key constituent is missing. Therefore, I conclude that, the above mentioned evidence does not provide good reasons for believing the alleged gappy propositions. I expand this conclusion to similar cases; in general, evidence appealed to for believing the content of sentences containing genuinely empty names does not provide good reasons for believing the gappy propositions claimed to be the content of such sentences by BT.

Here is the problem in other words. Recall that gappy propositions might be non-transparent in the sense that they might be neither introspectively nor a priori accessible to competent and rational speakers who entertain or believe them. Therefore, the gappy proposition expressed by 'Vulcan exists' might be neither introspectively nor a priori accessible to Le Verrier, for example. But if this gappy proposition is neither introspectively nor a priori accessible to Le Verrier, how does Le Verrier realize that his calculation is a good reason for believing *it,* not any other proposition? Likewise, if the gappy proposition expressed by 'Napoleon was a general' is neither introspectively nor a priori accessible to Twin You, how does Twin You realize that his testimonies provide good reasons for believing *it*, not any other proposition? Put differently, on the one hand, BT needs to make gappy propositions non-transparent to explain how competent and rational speakers *can* believe them when these propositions are gappy and false; on the other hand, BT's explanation of why competent and rational speakers *actually* believe gappy propositions implies that these propositions are, at least, to some degree transparent and available to competent and rational speakers. The two requirements clash.[59]

1.9.4. Are Gappy Propositions Propositions?

Here is the last, and by no means the least, problem for BT, and for all other views committed to gappy propositions. The problem, in a nutshell, is this: gappy propositions are not propositions. Here is the argument:

(i) If gappy propositions are propositions, then propositional structures are propositions.

(ii) Propositional structures are not propositions. So,

(iii) Gappy propositions are not propositions.

Let me justify each premise separately.

Justification of (i). Consider:

(53) Vulcan is dephlogisticated.

Both 'Vulcan' and 'is dephlogisticated' are empty; neither the name refers to an object nor does the predicate express any property. So, following BT, (53) semantically expresses a proposition that can be represented as:

(53p) <__ , __>

Therefore, if gappy propositions are propositions, (53p) is a proposition. But (53p) is nothing except a propositional structure, in particular the propositional structure generated by (53). Hence, if gappy propositions are propositions, propositional structures are propositions. (More examples can be made using other empty names and predicates).

Justification of (ii). I will justify (ii) in two different ways.

First, propositional structures are neither true nor false. Given that bivalence holds, propositional structures *do not* have any truth value. They also *cannot* have any truth value in any other circumstances of evaluation. Therefore, they are not truth evaluable. Given that things that are not truth evaluable are not propositions, propositional structures are not propositions. As an example, the Eiffel Tower is not truth evaluable, and hence is not a proposition. The same goes with propositional structures; they are not truth evaluable and hence they are not propositions.

Second, if propositional structures are propositions, then any singular Russellian proposition would be two propositions, but it is not the case; therefore, propositional structures are not propositions. A singular Russellian proposition is generated from a propositional structure by filling out its slots with individuals, properties, and relations (Braun; 1993, 461). If a propositional structure were a proposition before being filled out by individuals, properties and relations as well as after that, then each singular Russellian proposition would be two propositions: one, the very Russellian proposition and second the propositional structure from which the Russellian proposition is generated. But a Russellian proposition is not two propositions. Hence, propositional structures are not propositions. From (i) and (ii), (iii) follows. Therefore, gappy propositions are not propositions.

Objections and Replies

Objection 1

One may reject (i). It might be argued that the proposition semantically expressed by (53) is not a propositional structure. In other words, (53p) is not a propositional structure or more particularly, (53p) is not the propositional structure generated by (53). Therefore, the above argument is not sound.

Reply 1

The above objection can be replied to in different ways. Here are two.

First, let us assume that this objection is successful. Therefore, (53p) is *not* the propositional structure generated by (53). Let us assume that the following represents the propositional structure generated by (53):

(53ps) < ----, ---- >

So, (53) generates the propositional structure represented by (53ps) and semantically expresses the gappy proposition represented by (53p). If (53ps) and (53p) are different, then what is represented by '----' and what is represented by '___' should be different – since there is no other difference between (53ps) and (53p). But if what is represented by '___' is different from what is represented by '----', then (genuinely) empty names make some semantic contribution to the content of sentences containing them – otherwise '----' is the same as '___'. But this violates BT; according to BT (genuinely) empty names (or their relevant uses) do not contribute anything to the content of sentences containing them.[60]

Second, making such a distinction between the gappy proposition semantically expressed by (53), i.e. (53p), and the mere propositional structure generated by (53), i.e. (53ps), violates Braun's interpretation of gappy propositions in terms of *unfilled propositional structures*. As Braun (1993; 461-2) explains, a gappy proposition is a propositional structure with unfilled positions. Therefore, a propositional structure that is completely unfilled, i.e. the propositional structure itself, is a gappy proposition. In other words, Braun's construal of gappy propositions does not allow for the above mentioned distinction between (53p) and (53ps) in the first place.

Objection 2

One may reject (iii) by the following reasoning. Gappy propositions strongly resemble singular Russellian propositions. Therefore, they are some kind of propositions. Hence, gappy propositions are propositions. Therefore, (iii) is false.[61]

Reply 2

The above objection does not directly block the argument against gappy propositions; rather, it provides a separate argument for the claim that (iii), the conclusion, is false. Nevertheless, the objection fails. From the premise that gappy propositions strongly resemble propositions, what can validly be inferred is that there is something in common between them explaining this strong resemblance. In fact, a gappy proposition and a singular Russellian proposition may share the same *propositional structure* and this seems to be sufficient to explain the strong resemblance between a gappy proposition, on the one hand, and a singular Russellian proposition with the same propositional structure, on the other hand. This, to emphasize, does not make gappy propositions some kind of propositions.

Objection 3

One may reject (iii) by the following argument (Braun; 1993, 642):

> For another, unfilled propositions [i.e. gappy propositions] "encode" important semantical facts about sentences containing empty names that make sense. As I noted in section six, people can and have used those sentences in attempts to describe the world. Thus these sentences seem liable to (mis)represent in ways similar to sentences that express filled propositions [i.e. singular Russellian propositions]. So the unfilled propositions that encode their semantical properties are plausible candidates for truth value bearers.

Though this argument does not directly imply that gappy propositions are propositions, if we add the premise that *plausible candidates for truth value bearers* are propositions, it follows that gappy propositions are propositions.

Reply 3

This objection does not seem conclusive either. It is not obvious that the (important) semantic facts about sentences containing empty names that gappy propositions encode (in whatever sense of 'encoding') are the same semantic facts in virtue of them those sentences (mis)represent the world. If those semantic facts are not the same, which seems to be so, then it cannot be concluded that gappy propositions are plausible candidates for truth value bearers. In fact, quite to the contrary, it seems that if sentences containing empty names (mis)represent the world, they do *not* do this job in virtue of the alleged gappy propositions expressed by them according to BT. For example, when a competent and rational speaker utters the sentence 'Sherlock Holmes is famous', her utterance is unlikely to represent the world in virtue of the gappy proposition represented by:

<___, being-famous>

This, in turn, is because the above proposition does not contain enough content to (mis)represent the world. If her utterance (mis)represents the world in any sense, it is more likely to do this job in virtue of another proposition that can be expressed by 'such and such character is famous' or something along this line. In a nutshell, gappy propositions seem to be too weak to (mis)represent the world.

§ 1.10. Conclusion

Though part of BT, Braun's theory of understanding sentences, seems plausible and successful with regard to specific problems, BT does not seem to provide a promising defense of Neo-Russellianism. BT's replies (sections 4) to the first set of problems (sections 2) do not follow a unified methodology (see section 4, my notes on BT's replies to problems 2 and 3). Braun's theory of understanding sentences (section 6) which basically replies to the second set of problems (section 5), pushes BT more toward a version of Neo-Fregeanism, rather than Neo-Russellianism. The third set of problems suggest that BT does not properly explain the intuitions of competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers about the completeness, identity (sameness or difference), informativeness, and truth of atomic sentences containing genuinely empty names (section 8). And finally, the forth set of problems indicates that not only BT has some prima fascia implausible consequences but also gappy propositions themselves, regardless of their problem solving success, encounter some serious *epistemological* and *semantic* issues (section 9). I conclude, therefore, that BT should be resisted.

CHAPTER 2

IS SALMON NEO-MEINONGIAN?

§2.0. Introduction

Nathan Salmon (1986; 1987; 1990; 1998; 2002; 2005; 2007, to mention some) has extensively defended Neo-Russellianism (for a short introduction of Neo-Russellianism see chapter 1, §2.). In this chapter, I argue that Salmon's defense of Neo-Russellianism with regard to the problems raised by empty names is not successful. In particular, I argue that Salmon's theory of empty names (STE) is not only internally problematic but also Neo-Meinongian. In other words, I argue for the following two theses:

(T1) STE is internally problematic.

(T2) STE is Neo-Meinongian.

Here I do not argue whether Neo-Russellianism is logically consistent with Neo-Meinongianism or not. Also I do not argue against Neo-Meinongianism. However, if one assumes that:

(T3) Neo-Meinongianism should be resisted.

as most Neo-Russellians do, from (T2) and (T3), it follows that

(T4) STE should be resisted.

The same conclusion follows from (T1). Therefore, I conclude that STE should be resisted. In what follows, I will explain what STE is (§1.), why STE is internally problematic (§2.), what Neo-Meinongianism is (§3.), and why STE is Neo-Meinongian (§4.).

Before introducing Salmon's theory, there is a point worth mentioning. Scott Soames (1987; 1988; 1995; 2002, to mention some) has also extensively defended Neo-Russellianism. Moreover, he (2002, 89-95; 2005, 349-53) has endorsed and defended Nathan Salmon's theory of empty names. Therefore, what I say here about Salmon's theory is true about Soames' theory as well: they both hold Neo-Russellianism and a single theory of empty names. However, since Soames (2005;

350, n.29) explicitly says that with regard to empty names "I follow Nathan Salmon, "Existence," in J. Tomberlin (ed.), *Philosophical Perspectives, 1: Metaphysics* (Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview, 1987), pp. 49-108, and "Nonexistence," *Noûs* 32 (1998): 277-319", I only focus on Salmon's works in this chapter (see also Soames (2002; 339, n.37). Hence, this chapter has two further corollaries: (i) Soames' theory of empty names is internally problematic and (ii) Soames' theory of empty names is Neo-Meinongian. Therefore, by the same argument, Soames' theory of empty names should be resisted.

§2.1. Salmon's Theory of Empty Names (STE)

Salmon (1987; 1998; 2002) has defended Neo-Russellianism against the problem of empty names by what I call 'Salmon's theory of empty names' (STE). I will explain STE in two parts: first, varieties of empty names according to Salmon's view and second varieties of propositions expressed by sentences containing empty names according to his view.

2.1.1. Varieties of Empty Names

It is difficult to provide a clear definition of 'empty names' partly because it is difficult to find a consensus on what exists and what does not. The general idea is this: if 'n' is a proper name such that 'n does not exist' is true, 'n' is an empty name. So the question of being an empty name is tightly entangled with the question of existence and truth of negative existential sentences. Depending on different views on these matters, some names are empty and some are not. Here are examples of some names that are *usually* called 'empty names' – though this by no means implies that everyone agrees on this matter, as we shall see soon in STE:

(i) Names originated from fictions: 'Sherlock Holmes', 'Faust', etc.

(ii) Names originated from myths: 'Pegasus', 'Zeus', etc.

(iii) Names originated from superseded scientific theories: [1] 'Vulcan'[2], 'Planet X'[3], etc.

(iv) Names originated from modal (possible/impossible) discourse: 'Noman'[4], etc.

(v) Names originated from the past/future tense discourse: 'Socrates'[5], 'Newman'[6], etc.

The above so-called 'empty' names are divided into two main categories according to STE: genuinely referring and genuinely nonreferring.[7] Genuinely referring empty names are those empty names that are not genuinely empty; some things exist to which such names refer. Genuinely referring empty names are fictional names like 'Sherlock Holmes' and mythical names in their *broad* sense, namely names originated from myths like 'Pegasus' or from any mistaken theory like 'Vulcan'. All these names are genuinely referring names according to Salmon's theory:

> These various considerations, and related ones, weigh heavily in favor of account of names from fiction as unambiguous names for artifactual entities. In its fundamental use that arises in connection with the fiction – and I am inclined to think, its only literal use – 'Sherlock Holmes' univocally names a man-made artifact, the handiwork of Conan Doyle. Contra Russell et al., names from fiction do not have a prior, more fundamental use. They do not yield true negative existentials with thoroughly nonreferring names.
>
> The account suggested here is extendable to sentences that are uttered in debunking myths, like 'Pegasus does not exist'. By 'myth' I mean any mistaken theory that has been held true. A mythical object is a hypothetical entity erroneously postulated by a theory. Like a fictional object, a mythical object is an abstract (non-physical, non-mental) entity created by the theory's inventor. The principal difference between myth and fiction is that a myth is believed whereas with fiction there is only a pretense. An accidental storyteller, Le Verrier attempted in all sincerity to use 'Vulcan' to refer to a real planet. The attempt failed, but not for lack of a referent. Here as before, there is ample reason to doubt that 'Vulcan$_1$' [8] represents a genuine use of the original name. Le Verrier held a theory according to which there is such a use, and he intended and believed himself to be so using the name. Had the theory been correct, there would have been such a use for the name. But the theory is false; it was all a mistake. Kripke says that in attempting to use the name, nineteenth century astronomers failed to refer to any thing. But this verdict seems to ignore their unintended relationship to the mythical planet. One

> might just as well judge the ancients who introduced 'Hesperus' as a name for the first star visible in the dusk sky, unaware that the 'star' was in fact a planet, failed to name the planet. Nor had they inadvertently introduced two names, one for the planet and one thoroughly nonreferring. Plausibly, as the ancients unwittingly referred to a planet believing it to be a star, so Le Verrier may have unknowingly referred to Babinet's mythical planet, saying and believing so many false things abut it (for example, that it affects Mercury's orbit).
>
> (Salmon; 1998/2005, 82-3)

To sum up, according to Salmon's view, genuinely referring empty names are:

(i) Fictional names: e.g. 'Sherlock Holmes'

(ii) Mythical names (in the broad sense):

    (ii. i.) Names from mythology: e.g. 'Pegasus'

    (ii. ii.) Names from false scientific theories: e.g. 'Vulcan'[9]

The other category of empty names is constituted of genuinely nonreferring names. Genuinely nonreferring names are nonreferring in the following sense:

> A singular term is *nonreferring* (with respect to a context *c*, a time *t*, and a possible world *w*), in one sense, if and only if there does not exist any thing to which the term refers (with respect to *c*, *t*, and *w*).
>
> (Salmon, 1998/2005, 59)

Genuinely nonreferring names are of four kinds. The first three kinds are introduced as follows (Salmon; 1998/2005, 61-2):

> I call a nonreferring singular term *weakly nonreferring* if there might have existed something to which the term actually refers, and I call a nonreferring term *very weakly nonreferring* (at a time t) if (at t) there has existed, or is going to exist, something to which the term refers.... A *strongly nonreferring* term is one such that there could not have existed something to which the term actually refers.

Some examples will help. As an example of a *very* weakly nonreferring term, consider 'Socrates'. 'Socrates' refers to Socrates but there does not exist anything to which 'Socrates' refers. In other words, "there presently exists no one to whom the term 'Socrates', as a name for the philosopher who drank the hemlock, refers in English, but there did exist someone to whom the name now refers" Salmon (1998/2005, 61). As another example of a very weakly nonreferring name, consider 'Newman' as introduced and used by Kaplan.[10] Names of objects or individuals in the past and future, when such objects or individuals do not exist at the present time, the time of current use of such names, are very weakly nonreferring names.

As an example of a *weakly* nonreferring name, consider 'Noman' as introduced by Salmon (2005, 60-1): "Gamete S is a particular male sperm cell of my father's, and gamete E is a particular ovum of my mother's, such that neither is ever actually united with any other gamete. Following Kaplan's instructions [Kaplan (1973)], I have given the name 'Noman-0' to the particular possible individual who would have resulted from the union of S and E, had they united in the normal manner to develop into a human zygote. Noman (as I call him for short) is my merely possible brother." So, 'Noman' refers to Noman; however, there does not *exist* anything to which 'Noman' refers. As another example of weakly nonreferring names consider 'Nothan' as introduced by Salmon (2005, 62): "…let E_{NS} be the ovum from which I actually sprang. I have introduced the name 'Nothan-0' for the merely possible individual who would have sprang from the union of S and E_{NS} had they been united in the normal manner." Nothan (as I call him for short) is another merely possible brother of Nathan Salmon.

As an example of a *strongly* nonreferring term, consider '{Nothan, Nathan}', given 'Nothan' is introduced as above and 'Nathan' refers to Nathan Salmon: "there is in some sense a definite set that is actually referred to by this piece of set-theoretic notation (assuming it is properly interpreted), yet that set could not possibly exits. Even if Nothan had existed, {Nothan, Nathan} still could not do so"[11] (Salmon, 2005, 62).[12] In other words, '{Nothan, Nathan}' refers to {Nothan, Nathan} though there does not even possibly exist anything to which '{Nothan, Nathan}' refers. There is no possible world in which {Nothan, Nathan} exists since the two constituent possible people of this pair set do not possibly exist together. As another example of strongly nonreferring terms consider 'the singular proposition that Nothan might have been

CANADIAN THESES MOUSAVIAN, Seyed N. ISBN 978-0-494-46393-2

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taller than Nathan actually is'. By the same argument that {Nothan, Nathan} does not even possibly exist, the singular proposition that Nothan might have been taller than Nathan actually is does not even possibly exist. The pair set and the singular proposition in question are neither temporally nonexistent (like the referents of very weakly nonreferring terms) nor merely possible (like the referents of weakly nonreferring terms), they are impossible.

The forth kind of genuinely nonreferring terms are *very strongly nonreferring* (Salmon; 1987/2005, 48) or *thoroughly nonreferring* (Salmon, 1998/2005, 67); such terms do not literally have any referent, temporally nonexistent, merely possible or impossible. As an example of a very strongly nonreferring term, consider 'Nappy' as has been introduced below:

> I hereby introduce 'Nappy' as a name for the actual present emperor of France, whoever that might be, if there is one and to refer to nothing otherwise. Take note: I do not introduce 'Nappy' as a name for a particular fictional character that I just created. I am not storytelling and I am not pretending to use 'Nappy' as a name of a person. Nor do I subscribe to any theory to the effect that France now has an emperor. Rather I introduce 'Nappy' as a name for the actual present emperor of France, provided – contrary to my every expectation – that there presently is an emperor of France. Barring a fairly radical skepticism, we know that there is no such person as Nappy. Nappy is not a fictional character, not a mythical character, not a fabrication, not a flight of fancy. There is a very good reason why Nappy is none of these things. Not to put too fine a point on it, Nappy does not exist.
>
> (Salmon; 1998/2005, 84)

The difference between the first three kinds of nonreferring terms and the forth kind, very strongly nonreferring terms, is that in the former there is a definite thing to which a nonreferring term in some sense refers, though it is nonexistent; but in the latter "in no sense is there a definite nonexistent thing referred to" (Salmon; 1998/2005, 85).

To sum up, Salmon distinguishes between following four kinds of (genuinely) nonreferring terms:

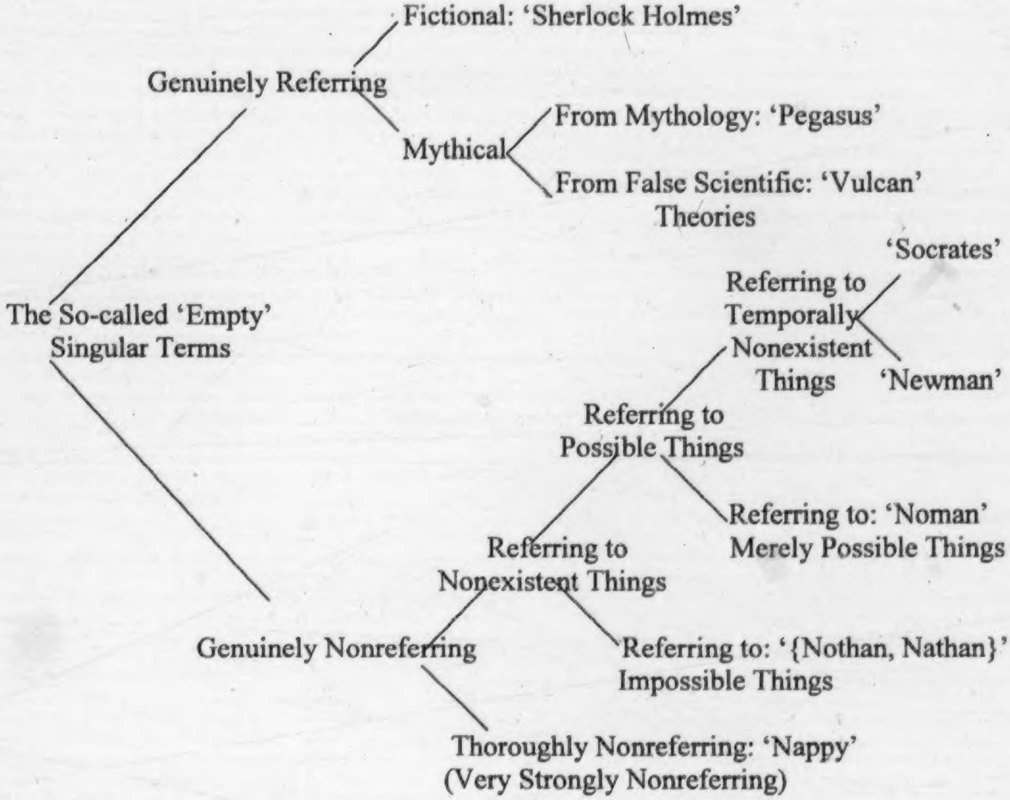
(i) Very weakly nonreferring terms:[13] e.g. 'Socrates', 'Newman'

(ii) Weakly nonreferring terms:[14] e.g. 'Nothan', 'Noman'

(iii)Strongly nonreferring terms:[15] e.g. '{Nothan, Nathan}', 'the singular proposition that Nothan might have been taller than Nathan actually is'

(iv)Very strongly nonreferring terms:[16] e.g. 'Nappy'.

Therefore, Salmon's overall account of the varieties of so-called 'empty' names (genuinely referring and genuinely nonreferring) can schematically be summarized as follows:


Fictional: 'Sherlock Holmes'
Genuinely Referring
From Mythology: 'Pegasus'
Mythical
From False Scientific: 'Vulcan'
Theories
'Socrates'
Referring to
Temporally
Nonexistent
Things
'Newman'
The So-called 'Empty'
Singular Terms
Referring to
Possible Things
Referring to: 'Noman'
Merely Possible Things
Referring to
Nonexistent Things
Genuinely Nonreferring
Referring to: '{Nothan, Nathan}'
Impossible Things
Thoroughly Nonreferring: 'Nappy'
(Very Strongly Nonreferring)

2.1.2. Varieties of Propositions Expressed by Sentences Containing Empty Names

According to Salmon, sentences containing genuinely referring empty names express *singular(Russellian) propositions* and sentences containing very strongly nonreferring names (the last kind of genuinely nonreferring names in the above taxonomy) express *gappy propositions*. I will explain.

According to STE, since genuinely referring empty names do refer to some objects, i.e. man-made abstract objects, sentences containing them do not differ from sentences containing ordinary referring names with regard to the kind of proposition they express: both semantically express singular (Russellian) propositions (SRP's). Since very strongly nonreferring names (thoroughly nonreferring) do not refer to anything in any sense, they do not contribute anything to the semantic contents of the sentences containing them according to Salmon. In Salmon's words (1998/2005, 88), "if α is thoroughly nonreferring, all of (1α)-(4α) [i.e. 'α is bald', 'α is not bald', 'α exists', and 'α does not exist'] [17] express structurally challenged propositions [i.e. gappy propositions]". Or:

> On the view I am proposing, although Nappy does not exist, the structurally challenged proposition that Nappy is bald exists, and is identical to the structurally challenged proposition that Cruly-0 ['Cruly-0' is another thoroughly nonreferring name] is bald. [18] [...] None of these propositions [expressed by sentences containing other kinds of nonreferring terms except thoroughly nonreferring terms] are structurally challenged in the manner of <___, baldness>. But all sentences of the form (1α) [i.e. 'α is bald'] with α a thoroughly nonreferring name express this same structurally challenged proposition, *this one is bald:* .
>
> (Salmon, 1998/2005, 87)

Sentences containing other kinds of genuinely nonreferring names except very strongly (or thoroughly) nonreferring names, namely very weakly, weakly, and strongly nonreferring names, express *nonexistent singular (Russellian) propositions*. I will explain.

Consider 'Socrates', it is a very weakly nonreferring name. Here is Salmon's view about the singular (Russellian) propositions semantically expressed by sentences containing 'Socrates':

> Socrates is long gone. Consequently, singular propositions about him, which once existed, also no longer exist. Let us call the no-longer existing

> proposition that Socrates does not now exist, 'Soc'. Soc is a definite proposition. Its present lack of existence does not prevent it from presently being true. Nor does its non-existence prevent it from being semantically expressible in English….Today the sentence 'Socrates does not exist' expresses Soc with respect to the present time. There presently exists no such proposition, but there was such a proposition. 'Socrates does not exist' does indeed single out a definite past thing in order to say of it, correctly, that it does not now exist. It does not follow that there presently exits someone designated in the sentence (and said therein not to exist). There presently exists no one to whom the term 'Socrates', as a name for the philosopher who drank the hemlock, refers in English, but there did exist someone to whom the name now refers. The sentence 'Socrates does not exist' now express Soc, and Soc is now true. And that is why the sentence is now true in English (even though Soc does not now exist). This account of the truth of 'Socrates does not exist' applies mutatis mutandis to objects from the future as well as the past.
>
> (Salmon; 1998/2005, 61)

So Soc is a definite proposition that once exited but now does not. However, it is *now* expressed by 'Socrates does not exist' and is *now* true. I call such definite propositions 'nonexistent singular (Russellian) propositions' (NSRP). Some NSRP's do not temporally exist since some of their constituents do not temporally exist – like singular propositions about Socrates or Newman (before Newman comes into existence). This view can be extended to sentence containing weakly and strongly nonreferring names as well:

> Curiously, an extension of the same solution may be made even for some strongly nonreferring terms….Either it is true or it is false that Nothan might have been taller than I actually am. This is a truth-valued singular proposition about a definite pair of possible individuals. But unlike the proposition that Nothan is 6 feet tall, this proposition could not possibly exist; there is no possible world in which its two constituent possible people exist together. The term 'the proposition that Nothan-0 [19] might have been taller Nathan Salmon

> actually is' is thus strongly nonreferring. Still, there is in *some* sense a definite impossible thing to which the term actually refers: the very singular proposition in question, which is true if Nothan might have been taller than I actually and is otherwise false….The negative existential 'The singular proposition that Nothan might have been taller than Nathan Salmon actually is, does not exist' is true, and its subject term is strongly nonreferring. In fact, the proposition expressed by this negative existential could not possibly exist. Yet there is in some sense a definite proposition that is in question, and is true. Something analogous to this is true also in connection with the pair set, {Nothan-0, Nathan Salmon}; there is in some sense a definite set that is actually referred to by this piece of set-theoretic notation (assuming it is properly interpreted), yet that set could not possibly exist.
>
> (Salmon; 1998/2005, 62)

Therefore, there are NSRP's that do not actually exist since some of their constituents do not actually exist – like singular propositions about Noman or Nothan. Also there are NSRP's that do not (even) possibly exist since some of their constituents do not (even) possibly exist – like singular propositions about {Nothan, Nathan}, or one that is about both Nothan and Nathan.

To sum up, if 'n' is a so-called 'empty' name and 'is F' an ordinary predicate (i.e. not empty) then according to STE:

(i) If 'n' is a genuinely referring name, 'n is F' semantically expresses a SRP (Singular Russellian Proposition).

(ii) If 'n' is a genuinely nonreferring name from the kinds of very weakly, weakly, or strongly nonreferring names, 'n is F' semantically expresses a NSRP (Nonexistent Singular (Russellian) Proposition).

(iii)If 'n' is a genuinely nonreferring name from the kind of very strongly (thoroughly) nonreferring names, 'n is F' semantically expresses a GP.

§2.2. STE Is Internally Problematic (T1)

There are two different lines of reasoning for (T1) based on the STE's commitment to NSRP's and GP's. Since I have argued against GP's in the first chapter, §9, I do not discuss the issues with GP's here. In a nutshell, GP's encounter serious epistemic and semantic problems. Therefore, STE, which is committed to GP's, is problematic. The other line of reasoning, which is the subject of this section, is based on the STE's commitment to NSRP's. I argue for (T1) through four open questions with regard to NSRP's. These questions challenge ontological and semantic status of NSRP's. In particular, these questions are: (i) If GP's expressed by sentences containing *very strongly* nonreferring terms exist, as STE claims, why do NSRP's expressed by sentences containing weaker kinds of nonreferring terms not exist? (ii) If NSRP's do not exist, as STE claims, are they Russellian *structured* propositions? (iii) If NSRP's can be true, as STE claims, what are their *truth-makers*? And (iv) if NSRP's do not have any kind of being, as STE claims, how do they *explain* the meaningfulness of sentences containing them? I argue that STE does not provide promising responses to the above questions. Therefore, I conclude that, STE is internally problematic. In what follows, I discuss these four questions in more detail.

2.2.1. Why do NSRP's not exist?

Consider:

(3) Nothan exists.

(4) Nappy exists.

Since 'Nothan' names a nonexistent individual, Nathan's merely possible brother who is incompossible with Nathan, 'Nothan' refers to a nonexistent individual. Therefore, according to STE, the proposition semantically expressed by (3) is a NSRP. However, since 'Nappy' names nothing, 'Nappy' does not refer to anything at all, existent or nonexistent – recall that 'Nappy' is a very strongly (thoroughly) nonreferring name. Therefore, according to STE, the proposition semantically expressed by (4) is a GP – it contains a gap within its structure. The problem in a nutshell is this: Salmon's account of the ontological status of the proposition semantically expressed by (3) and (4) is not coherent. 'Nothan' *refers* to Nothan, a nonexistent individual. Therefore, 'Nothan' has semantic referent. (Recall that according to Salmon, in some sense, there is Nothan. Nothan is not nothing; for example, Nothan is different from Noman, another merely possible brother of

Nathan). Hence, in the case of 'Nothan' *semantic reference happens*, though to a nonexistent thing. However, 'Nappy' does not refer to anything at all; in other words, in the case of 'Nappy' *semantic reference does not happen* at all. Now, if (3) and (4) both semantically express Russellian propositions (given Neo-Russellianism) and 'Nothan' in some sense has a definite referent while 'Nappy' does not, why does the proposition semantically expressed by (3) not exist while the proposition semantically expressed by (4) exists (recall that GP's are existent)?

Put differently, if the semantic contribution of a name into the proposition semantically expressed by the sentence containing that name is its referent, and if having no referent at all, in the case of 'Nappy', does not deprive the proposition semantically expressed by (4) from existence, why does having some kind of referent, in the case of 'Nothan', though a definite nonexistent thing, deprive the proposition semantically expressed by (3) from existence? In fact quite to the opposite, if Salmon takes the proposition semantically expressed by (4) to be an existent GP, we expect him to take the proposition semantically expressed by (3) to be an *existent* proposition with a definite nonexistent constituent (rather than a gap). The moral is this: if the Russellian proposition semantically expressed by (4) exists, then the Russellian proposition semantically expressed by (3) would exist as well. According to STE, however, the former exists (as a GP) but the latter does not. This is puzzling; why do NSRP's not exist when GP's do?

2.2.2. Are NSRP's Russellian propositions?

Salmon develops his view as a defense of Neo-Russellianism. According to Neo-Russellianism, all propositions are Russellian structured propositions (RP's). NSRP's do not exist. If something does not exist, it does not have a structure either. Therefore, NSRP's do not have structure. However, any RP has a structure. Therefore, NSRP's are not RP's. But if so, then STE is not correct. Or it might be that Neo-Russellianism is not correct. Either way, we have a problem. Here is the above argument in a logical style:

(ARG. A)

(A1) All propositions are RP's. [From Neo-Russellianism]

(A2) For any object x, if x does not exist, x does not have a structure. [SM][20]

(A3) NSRP's do not exist. [From STE]

(A4) NSRP's do not have structure. [From (A2) and (A3)]

(A5) For any proposition x, if x is a RP, then x has a structure. [From the definition of RP]

(A6) NSRP's are not RP's. [From (A4) and (A5)]

The conclusion of this argument might be that NSRP's are not propositions or that some propositions are not RP's. Either way, the conclusion is not consistent with Salmon's view (it clashes either with STE or Neo-Russellianism).

In defense of Salmon's view, one may reject (A2); it might be claimed that some objects do not exist but they have structure. This reply, however, does not seem promising, at least if Salmon's view is not Neo-Meinongian. One principal characteristic of Neo-Meinongian theories, as I discuss in the next section, is their commitment to the Independence Principle, i.e. an object's having properties is independent of its existence, though commitment to this principle is not on a par with being Neo-Meinongian. But even if the Independence Principle is accepted, the property of *having a structure/being structured* seems to be radically different from properties like *being possible* or *being nonexistent*, if there are such properties at all. The latter properties do not seem to be existence-entailing. In general, some properties like modal or negative properties might not be existence-entailing (or some kind of being-entailing). Also, some relations like intentional relations might not be existence-entailing (or some kind of being-entailing) with respect to some of their positions. But the property of having a structure or being structured is hardly conceivable if it is not existence-entailing (or at least, some kind of being-entailing) in the following sense: if x has a structure / is structured, then x exists (or at least has some kind of being). This seems to be enough to run (ARG. A). So, the open question for STE is this: are NSRP's RP's?

2.2.3. Do NSRP's have truth-makers?

Consider an atomic true NSRP. For example, the proposition semantically expressed by:

(5) Nothan might have been taller than Nathan actually is.[21]

Given that the semantic discourse of truth-bearer, truth-relation, and truth-maker is legitimate, what is the truth-maker of the proposition expressed by (5)? The truth-maker either exists or not. If it exists, what is it? Nothing among existing things seems to be the truth maker of (5). If the truth-maker does not exist, why (5) is true?

In reply, it might be said that the truth-maker actually *is* but does not *exist*. Since it *is* in the actual world, (5) is true and since it *does not exist* in the actual world, nothing among existing things is the truth-maker of (5). This reply, however, requires the distinction between *is* and *existence*. Such a distinction, as employed by Parsons' Nonexistent Objects Theory (PNOT) or Zalta's Abstract Objects Theory (ZAOT) shifts STE more toward Neo-Meinongianism. If so, then we have a separate argument for my other thesis (T2) that STE is Neo-Meinongian. If not, then the question remains unanswered.

2.2.4. Do NSRP's contribute into the explanation of the meaningfulness of sentences expressing them?

Consider a sentence that according to STE semantically expresses a NSRP, say (5) above. Intuitively, (5) is meaningful. Therefore, we have a particular semantic phenomenon which obtains, namely the meaningfulness of (5). One significant reason for acceptance of propositions is that they contribute into the explanation of the phenomenon of meaningfulness of sentences. Therefore, we expect the NSRP expressed by (5) to contribute into the explanation of the semantic phenomenon of meaningfulness of (5). However, it seems a plausible assumption that if something does not exist it cannot contribute into the explanation of an actual phenomenon. Otherwise, we have too many explanations for an actual phenomenon based on the nonexistence of too many obstacles that each can prevent the phenomenon from being actual. Therefore, since the NSRP semantically expressed by (5) does not exist, it cannot contribute into the explanation of the phenomenon of meaningfulness of (5). Hence, NSRP's do not have one of the important characteristics of propositions; they do not contribute into the explanation of the meaningfulness of sentences expressing them. The above argument can be summarized as follows:

(ARG. B)

(B1) For any object x and phenomenon *H*, if x does not exist and *H* obtains, x does not contribute into the explanation of *H*. [SM]

(B2) The proposition semantically expressed by (5) does not exist. [From STE]

(B3) (5) is meaningful. [Intuition]

(B4) The phenomenon of meaningfulness of (5) obtains. [From (B3)]

(B5) The proposition semantically expressed by (5) does not contribute into the explanation of the phenomenon of meaningfulness of (5). [From (B1), (B2), and (B4)]

The above argument is not intended to reveal an inconsistency in STE; rather, it may show an odd aspect of it.

Nevertheless, on behalf of Salmon's view, the first premise might be denied; some nonexistent thing may contribute into the explanation of a phenomenon that actually obtains, or something along this line might be claimed. Existence is not a necessary condition for something to contribute into the explanation of an actual phenomenon. Such a reply has two problems. First, it does not seem to accord with Salmon's own view about the explanation. Salmon is explicit that "if a possible state of affairs does not obtain, it cannot explain, or cause, or to be the result of any other state of affairs" (Salmon; 1987/2005, 49). (B1), though about objects not states of affairs, seems to be in accordance with Salmon's opinion. Admittedly I need to say more about the relationship between objects and states of affairs and should make the concept of contributing into the explanation of a phenomenon clearer. This obviously requires a separate place. However, it seems prima facie plausible that nonexistent objects, and hence NSRP's in question, cannot be part of any existent state of affairs – otherwise too many nonexistent objects will be part of an existent state of affairs. Moreover, the property of *explaining the meaningfulness of (5)*, or in general the property of *explaining the actual phenomenon H*, seems to be existence-entailing or at least some kind of being-entailing in this sense: if the phenomenon x explains the actual phenomenon *H*, then x and its constituents exist or at least have some kind of being. In other words, the property of explaining the actual phenomenon *H* hardly seems conceivable if it is not existence-entailing or some kind of being-entailing in the previous sense. Therefore, any thing that explains the phenomenon of meaningfulness of (5) and all its constituents should exist or at least have some kind of being. Since NSRP's neither exist nor have any kind of being, they do not contribute into the explanation of the phenomenon of meaningfulness of (5). But then the question is this: why do NSRP's lack such a principal characteristic of propositions? In other words, if NSRP's do not contribute into the explanation of the meaningfulness of the sentences expressing them, why should we consider them as propositions at all?

From the above considerations, I conclude that STE is internally problematic: STE is committed to NSRP's and GP's. But these kinds of propositions encounter serious problems. Therefore, STE is internally problematic.

Nevertheless, this conclusion might be hasty. Perhaps all these questions can adequately be replied if one uses all resources available within STE or Neo-Russellianism. Or it might be the case that if one enhances STE or Neo-Russellianism in some way, then the above questions can plausibly be answered. Let me assume so. In the rest of this chapter, I argue that even if we leave aside all internal problems of STE, the theory at best will be a Neo-Meinongian theory. In other words, I argue for my other thesis (T2) that STE is Neo-Meinongian. This is not a good news for a proponent of STE for two reasons. First, STE is supposed to provide a defense of Neo-Russellianism. If it turns out that STE is a version of Neo-Meinongianism, then STE will not be the kind of defense of Neo-Russellianism that most Neo-Russellians look for, especially Russell himself! Second, assuming (T3), that Neo-Meinongianism should be resisted, it follows that STE should be resisted as well. In the next section I introduce Neo-Meinongianism and in the section after that I argue that STE is Neo-Meinongian.

§2.3. Neo-Meinongianism

A theory is Neo-Meinongian, as I use the term here, if it is committed to the following three principles:

(N) The Nonexistence Principle:

Some objects/things do not exist.

(I) The Independence Principle:

An object's having properties is independent of its existence.

(U) The Unrestriction Principle:

The domain of quantifiers is not restricted to existent objects.

(N), (I), and (U) are central themes in Meinongianism.[22] Though Meinongians do not agree about many different aspects of Meinong's thought, in some sense or another they all share the above principles. By (N), I mean this: some objects do not have any kind of being. Given that objects that do not exist are nonexistent objects, from (N), it follows that there are nonexistent objects. By (I), I mean this: that an object has a property does not imply anything about its existence.[23] Like (N), by 'existence' in (I), I mean any kind of being in general. Therefore, from (I), it follows that an object can have properties without being existent. In other words, nonexistent objects can have some properties. And finally by (U) I mean this: the domain of the quantifiers of the theory is not restricted to the domain of existent objects that the theory is committed to. From (U), it follows that nonexistent objects are reachable by quantifiers of the theory. One may argue that (U) follows from (N); in this case (U) might seem redundant. However, the metaphysical character of (N) should be distinguished from the semantic character of (U). What makes a theory committed to (N) is the metaphysics of the theory; if the metaphysics of the theory acknowledges nonexistent objects, the theory is committed to (N). What makes a theory committed to (U) is the semantics of the theory; if the domain of the quantifiers of the theory is not restricted to the domain of existent objects posited by the metaphysics of the theory, the theory is committed to (U). Therefore, a theory might be committed to (N) since its metaphysics acknowledges nonexistent objects but might not be committed to (U) since, for instance, its language is too poor to be equipped with quantifiers.

There are many Neo-Meinongian theories[24] and they differ in significant aspects.[25] Discussing varieties of Neo-Meinongian theories goes beyond the scope of this chapter. However, to make the domain of survey more specific, by 'Neo-Meinongianism' I mean two theories in particular, both of them satisfying (N), (I), and (U): Parsons' (1980) Nonexistent Objects Theory (PNOT) and Zalta's (1983)

Abstract Objects Theory (ZAOT). Subsequent defenses of ZAOT by Linsky and Zalta (1994; 1995; 1996) should also be considered as parts of ZAOT.

Here is a brief exposition of PNOT and ZAOT.

First, PNOT. PNOT distinguishes between 'exists' and 'to be' in the sense that (6) is false but (7) is true:

(6) Zeus exists

(7) Zeus is an object.

From the falsehood of (6), it follows that Zeus does not exist. Therefore, Zeus is a nonexistent object and PNOT is committed to (N). Predicates (and hence properties) are divided into two groups: nuclear and extra-nuclear. The former are like 'is blue', 'is tall', and 'was kicked by Socrates' and the latter are like 'is fictional', 'is possible', and 'is thought about by Meinong'. The comprehension principle for objects, roughly speaking, goes like this: "for any set of nuclear properties, some object has all the properties in that set and no other nuclear properties" (Parsons; 1980, 18). Therefore, the set of nuclear properties *being round* and *being a square* uniquely characterizes an object that has the property of being round and the property of being a square [26]and no other nuclear property. Notice that extra-nuclear properties cannot be used in the comprehension principle for objects and hence no set of such properties can characterize any object. Therefore, the nonexistent object the round square, as introduced above, has some properties and hence PNOT is committed to (I). The property *exists*, in its usual sense, is an extra-nuclear property (Parsons; 1980, 11): "Specifically, I intend to use the word 'exists' so that it encompasses exactly those objects that orthodox philosophers hold to exist. In particular, it includes all the ordinary physical objects that we normally take to exist, and it does not include unicorns, gold mountains, winged horses, round squares (round square things) [27], Pegasus, or Sherlock Holmes. The theory given below will say that there are unicorns, there is such a thing as Pegasus, etc., but that none of these exist."[28] Quantifiers of PNOT "are always intended to be interpreted objectually [29]" (Parsons; 1980, 12). In virtue of the distinction between exists vs. to be, quantifiers range over all objects, existent or nonexistent. Hence PNOT is committed to (U).

Second, ZAOT. ZAOT gets two interpretations: Platonic and Meinongian (Zalta, 2003), here I use the latter. '∃' reads 'there is' or 'there is an object' and then the domain of objects divides into two mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories: abstract objects and ordinary objects. Abstract objects are necessarily nonexistent objects and ordinary objects are not necessarily nonexistent objects, i.e. they are possibly existent objects.[30] Since abstract objects are necessarily nonexistent objects, ZAOT is committed to (N). Predication is of two kinds: exemplification and encoding. As in orthodox theories, ordinary objects can have properties only in one sense, they can exemplify properties. Abstract objects, however, have properties in both senses of exemplifying and encoding. Therefore necessarily nonexistent objects have properties; in other words, ZAOT is committed to (I). Since '∃' reads 'there is', quantifiers range over all objects, abstract and ordinary. Hence ZAOT is committed to (U).

Recall that any theory committed to (N), (I), and (U) is a Neo-Meinongian theory. Therefore, PNOT and ZAOT are Neo-Meinongian. In the next section, as I pointed out earlier, I argue that STE is Neo-Meinongian as well.

§2.4. STE Is Neo-Meinongian (T2)

To show that STE is Neo-Meinongian I show that STE is committed to (N), (I), (U). I do this in three different subsections.

2.4.1. STE is committed to (N)

Recall,

(N) The Nonexistence Principle:

Some objects/things do not exist.

Here is the argument that STE is committed to (N):

(ARG. C)

(C1) NSRP's are objects/things.

(C2) NSRP's do not exist.

(C3) Some objects/things do not exist.

Justification of (C1): Sentences expressing NSRP's contain genuinely nonreferring proper names. Therefore, such sentences contain some proper names. By Neo-Russellianism, sentences containing proper names express singular Russellian propositions (SRP's). SRP's are composite objects. Composite objects are objects. Therefore, NSRP's are objects.

Justification of (C2): By definition, NSRP's are singular propositions that do not exist since some of their constituents do not exist. Therefore, NSRP's do not exist.

(C3) is the same as (N). Q. E. D.

Objections & Replies

Objection 1.

(C2) is false. Therefore, (ARG. C) is not sound. Here is this objection in more detail. It is not the case that NSRP's do not exist in general. Some NSRP's do exist *in some sense*. For example, the NSRP expressed by

(8) Socrates does not exist

which Salmon called 'Soc', *exists in the past* – though it does not exist at the present. As another example, the NSRP expressed by

(9) Newman does not exist

at the time of Kaplan's introduction of the name 'Newman', *exists in the future* – though it does not exist at the present. Finally, the NSRP expressed by

(10) Noman does not exist

exists in some possible world – though it does not exist in the actual world. So, NSRP's exist in some sense. Hence, (C2) is not generally true. Therefore, (ARG. C) is not sound.

Reply 1.

This reply comes in two parts.

First, assume that objection 1 is successful. Therefore, existence in the past, existence in the future, and existence in some other possible worlds are all different kinds of existence. Though this may save STE from being committed to nonexistent objects, the price of STE is still too high: STE is committed to both Eternalism (existence in the past as well as existence in the future should be considered as some kinds of existence) and Possibilism (existence in some other possible worlds should be considered as some kind of existence). From Eternalism, and some minimal assumptions concerning the circumstance of evaluation of (8), it follows that Socrates has some kind of existence now. Leaving aside the possibility of existence of his soul, which is not under question here, this conclusion seems counter intuitive. More crucially, from Possibilism, and the same minimal assumptions with regard to (10), it follows that Noman has some kind of existence in the actual world, contra intuition.

Second, there are some NSRP's that do not exist in *any sense*. Consider Salmon's own example:

(5) Nothan might have been taller than Nathan actually is.

The proposition expressed by (5) is a NSRP since it contains a genuinely nonreferring name, 'Nothan'. Also, as Salmon himself pointes out, this proposition does not even possibly exist; Nothan and Nathan are incompossible (recall that Nothan is the merely possible brother of Nathan Salmon who would have sprang from the ovum E_{NS} from which Nathan actually sprang and a particular gamete of a sperm cell of Nathan's father). Therefore, the proposition expressed by (5) is a NSRP that exists neither in the past nor in the future nor in any possible world. Hence, (ARG. C) can be restored as follows:

(ARG. D)

(D1) Some NSRP's are objects/things.

(D2) Such NSRP's do not exist in any sense.

(D3) Some objects/things do not exist in any sense.

The Justification of (D1) is the same as the justification of (C1). (D2) has been justified above. (D3) is the same as (N). Q. E. D.

Objection 2.

(D1) is false. Therefore, (ARG. D) is not sound. Here is this objection in more detail. The NSRP's that do not exist in any sense, like the proposition expressed by (5), are not objects/things in any sense as well. In other worlds, to be an object, implies to have some kind of existence, therefore those propositions that do not have any kind of existence, are not objects/thing in any sense.

Reply 2.

This reply comes in two parts.

First, assume that objection 2 is successful. Therefore, the proposition expressed by (5) and all other propositions that do not exist in any sense are not objects in any sense as well. If such propositions are not objects in any sense, they are not composite objects in any sense either. If they are not composite objects in any sense, they are not Russellian propositions (RP's). Therefore, there are some sentences containing proper names that do not express RP's. Hence, Neo-Russellianism is not correct. But STE presupposes Neo-Russellianism.

Second, there are good arguments that the NSRP's in question share the basic characteristics of Neo-Meinongian objects. Therefore, if the latter are objects/things in some sense, the former are objects/things in the same sense. Hence, the NSRP's in question are objects/things in some sense.

The basic characteristics of Neo-Meinongian objects are two: first, they are uniquely identifiable and second they have some (interesting) properties. In what follows, I argue that the NSRP's in question share both characteristics. I do this in two arguments, one for each characteristic.

Here is the first argument: the NSRP's in question and Neo-Meinongian objects are both uniquely identifiable.

(ARG. E)

(E1) Neo-Meinongian objects are uniquely identifiable.

(E2) The NSRP's in question are uniquely identifiable.

(E3) The NSRP's in question and the Neo-Meinongian objects are both uniquely identifiable.

Justification of (E1): Recall that we confined our use of Neo-Meinongian theories to two theories, PNOT and ZAOT.

First, consider PNOT. Here is the justification of (E1) in PNOT. A Neo-Meinongian object in PNOT is uniquely identifiable by the following comprehension principle for objects (which is an axiom schema in PNOT):

OBJ: For any wff ϕ which does not contain x_1 free, any instance of the following is an axiom [31]:

$(\exists x_1)(q^1) (q^1 x_1 \equiv \phi)$

So for example, we get the gold mountain as follows: if $p^1{}_1$ stands for being golden and $p^1{}_2$ for being a mountain, then we have:

$(\exists x_1)(q^1) (q^1 x_1 \equiv (q^1 = p^1{}_1 \vee q^1 = p^1{}_2))$

(Parsons, 1980, 74)

So, the Neo-Meinongian golden mountain, let call it 'a_0', only has two nuclear properties. To explain why there is only one such Neo-Meinongian object, we shall recall the Axiom of the Identity of Nuclear Indiscernibles in PNOT (Parsons, 1980, 74):

INI: $(x_1)(x_2) ((q^1) (q^1 x_1 \equiv q^1 x_2) \supset x_1 = x_2)$

It is easy to see why a_0 is unique. Suppose there is another Neo-Meinongian object, say a_1, which only has the nuclear properties of being golden and being a mountain. By INI, since a_0 and a_1 are distinct, there should be a unique nuclear property such that one of them has that property and the other does not. But if so, then one of them does not *only* have two properties of being golden and being a mountain, contrary to hypothesis.

Now consider ZAOT. Here is the justification of (E1) in ZAOT. Recall the comprehension principle for objects in Zalta (1983, p.34):

AXIOM(S) 4. ("A-OBJECTS"): for any formula ϕ where x is not free, the following is an axiom:

$(\exists x) (A!x \ \& \ (F) (xF \equiv \phi)$

So, for example, if $\ulcorner\phi\urcorner$ is substituted with $\ulcorner F=R \vee F=S\urcorner$, we have the abstract (Neo-Meinongian) object the round square, at least in one reading of the description 'the round square', that encodes the properties of roundness and squareness. This Neo-Meinongian object *only* encodes these properties since if it encodes any other property the left hand side of the bi-conditional in AXIOM(S) 4 would be true when the right hand side would be false (no property except roundness or squareness can make the disjunction $\ulcorner F=R \vee F=S \urcorner$ true). To explain why there is *only one* such Neo-Meinongian object, we shall recall the definition of identity in ZAOT:[32]

D4. $x=y =_{df}$

$$(O!x \& O!y \& \Box(\forall F)(Fx \equiv Fy)) \vee (A!x \& A!y \& \Box(\forall F)(xF \equiv yF))$$

D4 says that x is identical with y if and only if either they are both ordinary objects and necessarily exemplify the same properties or they are both abstract (Meinongian) objects and encode the same properties. And finally, as Zalta (1983, p.34) has argued the Meinongian object the round square as defined above should be unique:

> Suppose a_0 is such an object. It is easy to see that a_0 must be unique. For suppose some other distinct abstract object, say a_1, encoded exactly roundness and squareness. By D4, it would follow that either a_1 encoded a property a_0 did not, or vice versa, contrary to hypothesis.

Now let us return to the justification of (E2). Consider the NSRP expressed by (5), for example. This proposition is uniquely identifiable since it is a composite structured object made out of uniquely identifiable constituents. Here is the detail of the argument. Assume that there are two distinct RP's expressed by (5). Since they are distinct RP's, either they have different structures or they have different constituents. Since both have been expressed by (5), they have the same structure. And since the semantic contents of the constituents of (5), under a single interpretation, are constant, so the two propositions expressed by (5) have the same constituents. Therefore, they are identical, contrary to hypothesis. Therefore, all similar NSRP's in question are uniquely identifiable by the same argument. Q. E. D.

Here is the second argument: the NSRP's in question and Neo-Meinongian objects both have (interesting) properties.

(ARG. F)

(F1) Neo-Meinongian objects have some (interesting) properties.

(F2) The NSRP's in question have the same (interesting) properties.

(F3) The NSRP's in question and the Neo-Meinongian objects both have (interesting) properties.

Justification of (F1): By 'some (interesting) properties' I mean intentional, modal, and semantic properties like being thought by someone, being possible or impossible, having such and such semantic property. Recall that we confined our use of Neo-Meinongian theories to two theories, PNOT and ZAOT. First, consider PNOT. A Neo-Meinongian object in PNOT is individuated by its constituting nuclear properties; however, it can have a wide range of interesting properties. For example, though the gold mountain, as defined above, has only two nuclear properties of being golden and being a mountain, it has interesting extra-nuclear properties like *being thought by Parsons*, *being possible*, *being referred to by 'the gold mountain'*. Second, consider ZAOT. A Neo-Meinongian object in ZAOT is individuated by the properties encoded by it; however, it can exemplify a wide range of interesting properties. For example, though the round square, as defined above, encodes only two properties of being round and being a square, it exemplifies interesting properties like *being thought by Zalta*, *being impossible*, *being referred to by 'the round square'*.

Justification of (F2): The NSRP's in question have the same (interesting) properties. For example, the proposition expressed by (5) has the properties of *being thought by Salmon*, *being impossible*, and *being expressed by (5)*. So it has the same kind of intentional, modal, and semantic properties as the Neo-Meinongian objects. Q. E. D.

The moral is this: (ARG. E) and (ARG. F) imply that the NSRP's in question and Neo-Meinongian objects share two basic characteristics: firstly, they are uniquely identifiable (ARG. E) and secondly they have the same kind of (interesting) properties (ARG. F). Given that having these two characteristics provides sufficient conditions for counting Neo-Meinongian objects as objects/things, parity of reasoning suggests that the NSRP's in question are objects/things in the same sense. Hence, the NSRP's in question are objects/things in some sense.

Objection 3.

Salmon has provided two arguments that his view is not committed to Meinongian objects. Here is the first argument:

> It should be noted that the mentioned impossible objects are not like 'the round square', which Alexius Meinong claimed had lower-class ontological status, a sort of being shy of existence due to its incompatible properties of shape. What makes the pair set {Nothan-0, Nathan Salmon} and the proposition that Nothan might have been taller than I actually am impossible is not that they have inconsistent or otherwise incompatible properties. As a matter of pure logic, it is provable that nothing has inconsistent properties. An impossible object, like the mentioned pair set or singular proposition, is a complex entity composed of incompossible things. Any composite entity, even one whose components are incompossible, has a perfectly consistent set of attributes. An impossible object is not a Meinongian inconsistent Object. Though it cannot exist, an impossible object's properties are perfectly coherent.
>
> (Salmon; 1998/2005, 63)

Salmon's argument can be summarized as follows:

(ARG. G)

(G1) (Some) Meinongian objects are inconsistent objects (in the sense that they have inconsistent properties).

(G2) Salmon's impossible objects (and hence the NSRP's in question) are not inconsistent objects (in the sense that they do not have inconsistent properties).

Therefore,

(G3) (Some) Meinongian objects are not Salmon's impossible objects (and hence the NSRP's in question).

The above argument does not reject (ARG. C) directly; rather, it puts forward a separate claim that even if STE is committed to nonexistent objects (and hence to (N)), (some) Meinongian objects are still different from these nonexistent objects. Therefore, STE is not committed to *all* Meinongian objects.

Reply 3.

Before explaining my reply, here is a cautionary point about the *validity* of the argument. (G1), exactly speaking, is true of *some* Meinongian objects, if true at all. Obviously, some Meinongian objects like *the golden mountain* are not inconsistent objects; they only are not actual (or physical). This is not a point against Salmon's argument; rather it is a cautionary point about the logical form of (ARG. G). Therefore, the conclusion, i.e. (G3), is this: *some* Meinongian objects, i.e. the inconsistent ones, are not Salmon's impossible objects (and hence the NSRP's in question).

Here is my reply concerning the *soundness* of the above argument. Salmon has not explicitly mentioned what he means by 'Meinongian'. However, if by 'Meinongian' Salmon means the same thing as I mean by 'Neo-Meinongianism', (G1) is false and hence (ARG. G) is not sound. Among Neo-Meinongians there are at least two well-known strategies to distinguish between Neo-Meinongian objects and inconsistent (or contradictory) objects – one of these strategies, which I call 'predicate distinction', is closer to Meinong's own ideas (1907)[33] and the other, which I call 'predication distinction', is rooted in Meinong's student's works Ernest Mally (1912).[34] Either way Neo-Meinongian objects are not inconsistent (contradictory) objects in the above sense.

Some Neo-Meinongians, like T. Parsons (1978; 1980), R. Routley (1980), and D. Jacquette (1996), followed the predicate distinction approach which roughly speaking makes a distinction between two different kinds of predicates: nuclear versus extra-nuclear (to follow T. Parsons' terminology) or alternatively between two kinds of properties; nuclear versus extra-nuclear properties. Thereby, as pointed out by Meinong himself (see Parsons; 1980, 42), though the existing golden mountain in one sense has the property of being existent as part of its *so-being*, *sosein*, it does not exist in another sense: it lacks existence as part of its being, *sein*. Put differently, the existing golden mountain has the nuclear property of being existent but does not have the extra-nuclear property of existing. PNOT is a representative of this category of Neo-Meinongian theories. Parsons (1980, 42) explains the distinction between contradictory objects and his Neo-Meinongian objects as follows:

> Let us call an object which does infringe the law of contradiction (i.e. which satisfies some formula of the form 'x is A & ~(x is A)') a contradictory object. Then there are no contradictory objects (for if there were, some contradiction would be true). The round square is not a contradictory object; arguments that it is appeal to some principles such as (3) [(3) (x) (x is square ⊃ ~(x is round))], which is true if its quantifier is restricted to real objects, but not if its quantifier is read with complete generality. The round square is impossible only in the sense defined in chapter I: it has properties which no real object could have. [35]

Other Neo-Meinongians who follow the predication distinction strategy, like Rapaport (1978; 1982), Zalta (1983; 1989), and Pasniczek (1998), make a distinction between two kinds of predication: exemplification versus encoding (to follow Zalta's terminology). According to this construal of Neo-Meinongianism, the Neo-Meinongian object the existing golden mountain, for example, *does encode* properties of being existent, being golden, and being a mountain but it *does not exemplify* these properties, rather it exemplifies properties like being necessarily nonexistent and being thought by Meinong. Though according to the predication distinction strategy there is one and only one kind of properties, the distinction between two modes of predication prohibits Meinongian objects of having inconsistent (or contradictory) properties. So, again, Meinongian objects are not inconsistent (or contradictory) objects. ZAOT is a representative of this category of Neo-Meinongian theories. Zalta's Neo-Meinongian objects also have a consistent set of properties.[36]

The moral is this: if by 'Meinongian' Salmon means the same thing as I mean by 'Neo-Meinongian', then (ARG. G) is not sound, its first premise is false. If by 'Meinongian' Salmon means something different from what I mean by 'Neo-Meinongian', then (ARG. G) does not establish that the NSRP's in question are not Neo-Meinongian objects in the sense I use the term 'Neo-Meinongian'. Either way the objection fails.

Objection 4.

Salmon's second argument that his theory is not committed to Meinongian objects is this:

> Here again, I am not making the Meinongian claim that any description, even if logically contradictory, refers to some possible or impossible object. Quine's description 'the merely possible fat man in that doorway' does not refer to any sort of object, whether existent, merely possible, or impossible. It is a very strongly nonreferring term. Similarly, Meinong's round square is not only not a possible object, it is not even an impossible object.
>
> (Salmon; 1987/2005, 48)

Focusing on incoherent descriptions, the above argument can be summarized as follows:

(ARG. H)

(H1) Any incoherent description, either logically contradictory or merely actually without any referent, refers to (some) Meinongian object.

(H2) No incoherent description, either logically contradictory or merely actually without any referent, refers to Salmon's impossible objects.

Therefore,

(H3) (Some) Meinongian objects are not Salmon's impossible objects (and hence NSRP's in question).

As with (ARG. G), (ARG. H) does not reject (ARG. C) directly; rather, it puts forward a separate claim that even if STE is committed to nonexistent objects (and hence to (N)), (some) Meinongian objects are still different from these nonexistent objects. Therefore, STE is not committed to *all* Meinongian objects.

Reply 4.

Before explaining my reply, here is again a short cautionary point about the argument. For the argument to be valid, the conclusion (H3), exactly speaking, is this: *some* Meinongian objects, i.e. those that are postulated as the result of the assumption that any incoherent description refers to some object, are not Salmon's impossible objects (and hence the NSRP's in question).

Here is my reply concerning the *soundness* of the above argument. Salmon has not explicitly specified what he means by 'Meinongian', to repeat myself. However, if by 'Meinongian' he means the same thing as I mean by 'Neo-Meinongian', (H1) is false and hence (ARG. H) is not sound.

Let me confine myself to PNOT and ZAOT. First, consider PNOT. Here is why (H1) is false in PNOT. According to Parsons' interpretation of Meinong, Quine's description of 'the possible fat man in that doorway' is a genuinely nonreferring term since the property of *being possible* in its usual sense is an extra-nuclear property and cannot be used in the comprehension principle of objects as a defining property. Parsons explicitly addresses this particular case:

> Well, regarding "*the* possible fat man in the doorway", there is no such thing, for there are *many* possible fat men in the doorway. I am now assuming that being fat, being a man, and being in the doorway are all nuclear properties, but that being possible is an extra-nuclear one. There are many objects which have those three nuclear properties, some of them possible and some of them impossible.
>
> (Parsons; 1980, 28)

Therefore, according to PNOT, it is not the case that any incoherent description refers to some Neo-Meinongian object. Hence, (H1) is false.

Second, consider ZAOT. Here is why (H1) is false in ZAOT. Zalta (1983, 40-50; 1988, 78-98) also explicitly acknowledges genuinely nonreferring definite descriptions. Hence, according to ZAOT, it is not the case that any incoherent description refers to some Neo-Meinongian object. Hence, (H1) is false again.

The moral is this: if by 'Meinongian' Salmon means the same thing as I mean by 'Neo-Meinongian', then (ARG. H) is not sound, its first premise is false. If by 'Meinongian' Salmon means something different from what I mean by 'Neo-Meinongian', then (ARG. H) does not establish that some Neo-Meinongian objects are not the same as the NSRP's in question in the sense I use the term 'Neo-Meinongian'. Either way the objection fails.

2.4.2. STE is committed to (I)

Recall,

(I) The Independence Principle:[37]

An object's having properties is independent of its existence.

Here is the argument that STE, i.e. Salmon's theory of empty names, is committed to (I).

(ARG. J)[38]

As we explained the content of (I) in section 3, to show the above claim, it suffices to show that existence is not a necessary condition for having properties in STE. This, however, is easy to verify. Salmon accepts what I call 'The Precedence Thesis' (PT); in a nutshell, (PT) asserts that predication precedes existence. (PT), in turn, entails (I). Therefore, STE is committed to (I). Here is (PT):

> Even *possible* existence seems not to be a pre-requisite for having properties, since it seems that in some sense, some impossible things have properties! The moral: The metaphysical condition of having properties is quite separable from the ontological condition of existing. Predication precedes existence.
>
> (Salmon; 1987/2005, 49)

(PT), if not the same as (I), obviously entails (I). Q. E. D.

Objection & Reply

Objection 1.

Though STE is committed to (PT), and hence (I), it is not committed to all Neo-Meinongian consequences of (I). Most notably, STE does not imply that there are two kinds of predicates (or properties) as PNOT does or that there are two kinds of predication as ZAOT does.

This objection does not reject (ARG. J) directly; rather, it puts forwards a separate claim that STE does not have all consequences of Neo-Meinongian theories and hence might be theoretically less expensive than such theories.

Reply 1.

This reply comes in two parts.

First, that STE is committed to (I) is enough to establish our claim that STE is Neo-Meinongian. So we do not need to show that STE has all properties of some

New-Meinongian theories like PNOT or ZAOT. In fact, there are some other Neo-Meinongian theories that differ from PNOT and ZAOT with this regard. For example, though Priest's (2005) theory is a Neo-Meinongian theory, in the sense that it is committed to (N), (I), and (U), it does not have the consequence that there are two kinds of properties (as PNOT) nor that there are two kinds of predication (as ZAOT).

Second, STE seems to be very similar to PNOT in distinguishing between two kinds of properties, though Salmon does not use the same terminology as Parsons (1980). Salmon distinguishes some properties from others as follows:

> [...] unless a particular possible individual exists, it cannot be anywhere or do anything. Although Noman's properties are not restricted to negative properties and modal properties, they are severely restricted. Noman does not have experiences. A merely possible individual does not live and does not learn.... The properties of merely possible individuals, and of some impossible individuals, are inert; they include only such unimpressive credentials as being referred to, not being a native Californian, and possibly existing or necessarily not existing. Not an enviable resume. The mere property of existing, once it is acquired, opens up a galaxy of new possibilities.
>
> (Salmon; 1987/2005, 49)

Although Salmon does not use his distinction between 'inert' properties, as called above, and other properties to make a comprehension principle for objects, the distinction resembles Parsons' and does a significant job in Salmon's theory. Only inert properties can be truly predicated to Salmon's nonexistent objects. Therefore, STE is not even less expensive than Neo-Meinongian theories like PNOT form this aspect.

2.4.3. STE is committed to (U)

Recall,

(U) The Unrestriction Principle:

The domain of quantifiers is not restricted to existent objects.[39]

Salmon himself has argued as follows:

> The sense in which there is a proposition that Nothan might have been taller than I actually am is troublesome. The fact that it seems to require quantification over objects that could not exist should give one pause. Still, it is difficult to deny that in *some* sense, there are such objects to be quantified over; the proposition that Nothan might have been taller than I actually am is one such. To deny this would be to undertake the burden of explaining how it is either true that Nothan might have been taller than I actually am or true that Nothan could not have been. Either way, the result seems to be a true singular proposition that exists in no possible world. A substitutional interpretation of 'there are' may be called for when impossible objects rear their ugly heads.
>
> (Salmon; 1998/2005, 62, n.24)

The following argument can be recovered from the above quote.

(ARG. K)

Given that bivalence holds, then:

(K1) 'Nothan might have been taller than Nathan actually is *or* Nothan might not have been taller than Nathan actually is' is true.

So, either:

(K2) 'Nothan might have been taller than Nathan actually is' is true.

or:

(K3) 'Nothan might not have been taller than Nathan actually is' is true.

Given the following:

(K4) If '*S*' is true then there is the proposition that *S*.

Then, either (from (K2) and (K4)):

(K5) There is the proposition that Nothan might have been taller than Nathan actually is.

or (from (K3) and (K4)):

(K6) There is the proposition that Nothan might not have been taller than Nathan actually is.

Either way there is a singular proposition with incompossible constituents. Hence, the domain of quantifiers, 'there is', is not restricted to existent objects. Hence, STE is committed to (U). Q. E. D.

If we accept bivalence and the classical definition of disjunction, the only assumption in need of justification is (K4).

Justification of (K4):

First, a short note. (K4) is not a sentence; it is a schema. Since both '*S*' and *S* appear in (K4), quantifying over *S*, requires quantifying into quotation context. I have avoided this. Instead, for each instance of (K4) to be true, '*S*' should be substituted with a declarative sentence of English – not with its name.

Second, the justification of (K4). Instances of (K4) follow from instances of (K4.1) and (K4.2):

(K4.1) If '*S*' is true, then the proposition that *S* is true.

(K4.2) If the proposition that *S* is true, then there is the proposition that *S*.

Like (K4), neither (K4.1) nor (K4.2) is a sentence, only their legitimate instances are true. To justify (K4), therefore, we need to justify (K4.1) and (K4.2).

First, consider (K4.1). Instances of (K4.1) hold if we assume that:

(i) Propositions are primary truth bearers (from Propositionalism)

and

(ii) The semantic content of ⌜the proposition that *S*⌝ is the proposition expressed by '*S*'.

Neo-Russellianism presupposes both. In particular, Neo-Russellianism presupposes Propositionalism, so it satisfies (i). Also, Neo-Russellianism takes the semantic content of ⌜that *S*⌝ to be the Russellian structured proposition (RP) semantically expressed by '*S*'. Given that the expression ⌜the proposition that *S*⌝ has the same semantic content as ⌜that *S*⌝, Neo-Russellianism satisfies (ii) either. Recall that STE is a defense of Neo-Russellianism against the problems raised by empty names. Therefore, STE is committed to Neo- Russellianism and all its requirements. Hence, STE is committed to (i) and (ii). Therefore, STE is committed to (K4.1).

Second, consider (K4.2). (K4.2) can be justified by reductio. Assume that an instance of (K4.2) is false. Therefore, for a particular sentence 'S', the antecedent of (K4.2) is true, namely:

(iii) The proposition that S is true.

and the consequent of (K4.2.) is false. Or alternatively, the negation of the consequent of (K4.2) is true, namely:

(iv) There is not the proposition that S.

Assume that the latter entails:

(v) There is no proposition that S.

Since there is no proposition that S, no sentence can express the proposition that S, even 'S'. But if 'S' is true[40], by Propositionalism, 'S' expresses the proposition that S. Contradiction. Therefore, (K4.2) is true.

Objections & Replies

Objection 1.

Though Salmon has provided an argument that in some sense the domain of quantifiers is not restricted to existent objects and some NSRP's which do not exist in any sense can be reached by quantifiers, his last sentence explains that he does not interpret quantifiers objectually. Salmon (1998/2005, 62, n.24) explicitly mentions that "a substitutional interpretation of 'there are' may be called for when impossible objects rear their ugly heads." Therefore, strictly speaking, STE does not quantify over nonexistent objects, or the NSRP's in question. Moreover, if we read quantifiers substitutionally, there is no ontological commitment to nonexistent objects of any sort according to STE.

Reply 1.

This reply comes in three parts.

First, concerning the latter claim that substitutional reading of quantifiers does not bring about any ontological commitment to nonexistent objects, it should be noted that STE's commitment to nonexistent objects has a separate ground (§ 4.1.). STE is committed to nonexistent objects (and hence (N)) since it is committed to some NSRP's that according to Neo-Russellianism are objects/things but do not exist in any sense. Therefore whether the domain of quantifiers is restricted to existent objects or not does not change STE's metaphysical commitment to nonexistent objects. Of course, if STE treats quantifiers objectually and let them vary over nonexistent objects, this can make another argument for STE's commitment to nonexistent objects.

Second, here is a methodological concern. The substitutional reading of quantifiers is deliberately silent about the semantic problems concerning the determination of truth value of atomic sentences containing names (or open formulas under assignment functions). What makes a particular substitutional quantificational sentence like $\ulcorner(\exists x)\ \varphi\urcorner$ true, is a true *instance* of $\ulcorner\varphi\urcorner$ (which contains a proper name instead of the free variable 'x'). Substitutional quantification does not imply anything about the truth of the instance of $\ulcorner\varphi\urcorner$ and this is crucial for the substitutional reading – otherwise it would not be substitutional. STE, however, is not silent with this regard. For example, the sentence 'Nothan exists' is false because the unique individual referred to by 'Nothan' is nonexistent in the actual world. Thus STE is deliberately not silent about the semantic problems concerning the determination of truth values of atomic sentences (or open formulas under assignment functions). The methodologies of the two approaches obviously clash.

Third, reading quantifiers in (K5) or (K6) substitutionally falls short of the requirements of Neo-Russellianism as a propositionalist view. According to substitutional interpretation of quantifiers, quantifiers do not range over objects, rather they range over a substitution class, let say names. So the truth of quantified sentences does not bring about any ontological commitment to objects as referents of names. Since we are concerned about propositions, substitutional interpretation of quantifiers in (K5) or (K6), if successful, do not bring about any ontological commitment to propositions as referents of 'that'-clauses. But Neo-Russellianism, as a propositionalist view, exactly requires something more than this: If a sentence is true, the proposition semantically expressed by that sentence is true (from Propositionalism), and propositions semantically expressed by sentences are Russellian structured propositions (from Neo-Russellianism). Therefore, substitutional reading of quantifiers in (K5) or (K6) does not account for the requirements of Neo-Russellianism as a propositionalist view.

Objection 2.

As some passages from Salmon (1987) suggest, he thinks of the logic of STE as a free logic. For instance,

> I once found these claims baffling. *Cf.* Salmon, *Reference*, p.39 n. [Salmon refers to his book *Reference and Essence* (1981)]. I was confused. Once it is admitted that classical UI and EG are fallacious, and that an additional existential premise is all that is required in each case to correct the fallacy, what once appeared utterly mysterious becomes perfectly clear and straightforward. The claim that 'Noman' refers to Noman and yet does not refer to anything, properly understood, is really no more baffling than the claim that 'Shakespeare' refers to Shakespeare, who is long dead.
>
> (Salmon; 1987/2005, 46, n.50)

In fact, Salmon (1987/2005, 44-5) acknowledges that "the original free logical versions of UI and EG are required by the presence of true sentences in which singular terms that do not refer to (denote) existing individuals occur (outside of nonextensional contexts, such as those created by quotation marks), whether or not these terms refer to possible individuals that do not exist." If so, then the domain of quantifiers is restricted to existent objects and so none of nonexistent objects and hence none of the NSRP's in question is reachable by quantifiers. Hence, STE is not committed to (U).

Reply 2.

This reply comes in four parts.

First, as the first part of Reply 1, STE's commitment to nonexistent objects is not rooted in the fact that STE lets quantifiers range over nonexistent objects. Therefore, whether logical rules governing quantifiers are free logical or not does not change STE's metaphysical commitment to nonexistent objects.

Second, this reply does not match with Salmon's (1998/2005, 62, n.24) own argument that in *some* sense *there are* some nonexistent objects, i.e. the NSRP's discussed above. Salmon seems to suggest that the quantifiers in (K5) or (K6) should be read substitutionally. But if the quantifiers are substitutional quantifiers, then they are not free logic quantifiers. Substitutional quantifiers are different from free logic quantifiers.[41] Substitutional quantifiers are definable in terms of objectual meta-linguistic quantifiers ranging over singular terms of object language. They obey the classical rules of UI and EG. Free logic quantifiers, on the other hand, are conventional objectual quantifiers ranging only over existent objects. They violate the classical rules of UI and EG. This is not because they are not conventional objectual quantifiers; rather, it is because nonreferring singular terms are allowed in the object language. In other words, classical and free logic quantifiers have different rules since they work in different languages. Nevertheless, both are objectual and hence different from substitutional quantifiers.

Third, it might be said that it is true that free logic quantifiers are objectual and therefore quantifiers in (K5) or (K6) should be read objectually but if quantifiers are free logic quantifiers (K5) or (K6) are not derivable in the first place. In this case, (K4.2) is false. Recall,

(K4.2) If the proposition that *S* is true, then there is the proposition that *S*.

Therefore, (ARG K) is invalid.

This line of reasoning is not promising either. The above reason is based on the assumption that if the definite description 'the proposition that *S*' is nonreferring and quantifiers are free logic quantifiers then from true sentences containing the definite description 'the proposition that *S*', like 'the proposition that *S* is true', we cannot validly infer the quantified sentence 'there is the proposition that *S* and this proposition is true' – we need the extra assumption that 'the proposition that *S* exists'. Though this point per se is correct, the justification of (K4.2) does not require the above inference; it is based on Propositionalism and the assumption that if, for a particular sentence 'S', there is no proposition that S, then no sentence can express the proposition that S, even 'S'. But 'S' semantically *expresses* the proposition that S because 'S' is true (see note 40).

Fourth, here is a methodological concern. STE is a semantic theory dealing with basic semantic problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism. Free logic is a formal apparatus only dealing with formal issues of handing empty names within a conventional understanding of quantifiers. In fact, one of the advantages of free logic has been seen to be its ontological neutrality with regard to the basic semantic issues entangled with empty names.[42] In other words, from a semantic point of view, free logic is in need of a semantic ground itself. Therefore, employing free logic in defense of STE seems methodologically dubious.

Objection 3.

As some passages of Salmon (1987/2005) suggest, quantifiers might be interpreted objectually. These objectual quantifiers are possibilist and eternalist in the sense that they range over all possible and past/future objects. Therefore, the classical UI and EG can be saved and STE needs neither the substitutional reading of quantifiers nor free logical version of UI and EG:

> When referring to merely possible individuals, it is somewhat more natural (although by no means mandatory) to allow one's quantifies to go possibilist, thereby preserving the form of classical UI and EG. Likewise, when referring to past or future individuals, it is natural to allow one's quantifiers to range over all past or all future individuals.
>
> (Salmon; 1987/2005, 46, n.50)

Moreover, the possibilist and eternalist quantifiers should not be taken as bringing about any ontological commitment to possible or past/future individuals/objects:

> I shall not assume, however, that there is anything illegitimate about possibilist quantifiers *per se* or about the concept of every *possible individual*. Kit Fine has shown that the possibilist universal and existential quantifiers are fully definable using the standard modal operators in tandem with actualist quantifiers over both individuals and "propositions" qua sets of possible worlds, or alternatively using standard modal operators in tandem with actualist quantification over both individuals and possible worlds together with a predicate for a possible world's being realized….
>
> ….For example, the locution ⌜Some possible individual is Φ⌝ may be defined as ⌜The possible world *w* that is realized is such that there might have existed an individual that, in *w*, is Φ⌝
>
> (Salmon, 1987; 2005, 16 and n.10)

Reply 3.

This reply comes in three parts.

First, as the first part of Reply 1 and 2, STE's commitment to nonexistent objects is not rooted in the fact that STE lets quantifiers range over nonexistent objects. Therefore, whether quantifiers are substitutional, objectual and free logical, or objectual and classical (possibilist and eternalist), does not change STE's metaphysical commitment to nonexistent objects.

Second, here is a methodological concern. STE is a semantic theory dealing with basic semantic problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism. A Fine style reductionism, however, is a reconstruction program of de re modal discourse in terms of "ordinary modal idioms and quantification over actuals" (Prior and Fine, 1977, 118). Such a program does not aim at providing a semantic analysis of "ordinary modal idioms"; rather it assumes that "the ordinary modal idioms (necessarily, possibly) are primitive" (ibid, 116) and provides a translation of de re modal discourse into de dicto. The two theories seem to have different assumptions and purposes.

Third, the above objection does not aim at rejecting (ARG. K) directly; rather, it tries to recount the conclusion of the argument by broadening the domain of quantification and then reducing the de re modal or temporal discourse of nonexistent objects to de dicto avoiding any ontological commitment to possible or past/future objects. However, (ARG. K) forces quantification over nonexistent objects like the proposition expressed by (5), 'Nothan might have been taller than Nathan actually is', that are not possible objects. Therefore, possibilist and eternalist quantifiers are not still able to capture the sense of quantification used in (ARG. K). Hence, the above objection is not able to recount the conclusion of (ARG. K).

Objection 4.

One may reject (ARG K) by rejecting (K4), if '*S*' is true then there is the proposition that *S*. (K4) might be rejected by undermining (K4.2.), if the proposition that *S* is true, then there is the proposition that *S*. Recall the reductio argument for (K4.2.). One may reject the last step of the argument:

Since there is no proposition that S, no sentence can express the proposition that S, even 'S'.

It might be claimed that 'there is no proposition that S' only means that there is no *existent* proposition that S. From the latter claim, it cannot be inferred that no sentence can express the proposition that S; in fact, if there is the nonexistent proposition that S, some sentence, 'S' in particular, can express that nonexistent proposition.

Reply 4

Though the above objection may block (ARG K), it establishes the conclusion of the argument from another way. (ARG. K) is supposed to establish the conclusion that STE is committed to (U), the domain of quantifiers is not restricted to existent objects. But the above objection requires quantification over nonexistent propositions; for the objection to be successful, one needs to assume that there is the nonexistent proposition that S, in some sense of 'is', such that 'S' can express it. Since according to Neo-Russellianism, all propositions are Russellian propositions, and Russellian propositions are structured *objects*, then the nonexistent proposition that S, is a nonexistent object. Hence, the domain of quantifiers is not restricted to existent objects. And, therefore, STE is committed to (U).

From sections §4.1-3, it follows that STE is committed to (N), (I), and (U). Therefore, STE is Neo-Meinongian.

§2.5. Conclusion

Nathan Soames (1987; 1998) and following him Scott Soames (2005; 349-353) have defended Neo-Russellianism against the problems raised by empty names. I have argued that Salmons' Theory of Empty names (STE) does not provide a successful defense of Neo-Russellianism. In particular, I have argued that STE is not only internally problematic, (T1), but also Neo-Meinongian, (T2). STE is internally problematic since it is committed to nonexistent singular Russellian propositions (NSRP's) and gappy propositions (GP's). I discussed my arguments against GP's in chapter 1, §9. So I did not repeat them here. In §2, I discussed four open questions with regard to NSRP's. STE does not provide plausible replies to these questions and it is not obvious how it may do. From the problems raised by STE's commitment to NSRP's and GP's I conclude that STE is internally problematic (T1). After introducing Neo-Meinongianism in§3, I argued for (T2), that STE is Neo-Meinongian, in §4. The argument has been developed in there parts, §4.1-3, by showing that STE is committed to (N), (I), and (U). (T2) raises two problems. First, if STE is Neo-Meinongian, it will not provide the kind of defense of Neo-Russellianism that most Neo-Russellians look for. Second, most Neo-Russellians assume that Neo-Meinongianism should be resisted (T3). If so, from (T2) and (T3), it follows that STE should be resisted.

CHAPTER 3

PRAGAMTIC IMPLICATURES AND EMPTY NAMES

§3.0. Introduction:

As we have seen so far, Neo-Russellianism has serious problems with regard to empty names. In chapters 1 and 2 we showed that Braun's and Salmon's theory do not provide successful defenses of Neo-Russellianism. Many Neo-Russellians (Fred Adams, Garry Fuller, Robert Stecker, and Kenneth Taylor, to mention some) have defended Neo-Russellianism and the Gappy Proposition View by what I call the 'Pragmatic Explanation View'. Roughly speaking, the view says that competent and rational speakers widely and systematically conflate some descriptive propositions pragmatically implicated by utterances of sentences containing empty names with the semantic contents of such sentences. Such a conflation can provide a basis to answer problems that the Gappy Proposition View does not, or so ha been claimed.

In this chapter, I argue against the Pragmatic Explanation View. [1] Before explaining my arguments against the Pragmatic Explanation View, however, I shall introduce the view in more detail. I do this in section 1 focusing on a recent formulation of the view by Adams and Dietrich (2004). To do justice, we should also pay attention to some advantages of the view in contrast to other Neo-Russellian views; particularly, in section 2, I explain how the Pragmatic Explanation View accounts for the intuitions of competent and rational speakers concerning the completeness of the content, truth, and difference in the content of sentences containing empty names. Thereafter, in section3, I explain and examine the previous arguments against the Pragmatic Explanation View in the literature; I discuss seven arguments provided by Braun (1993), Taylor (2000), Reimer (2001), Everett (2003), and Green (2007), Adams and Dietrich's (2004) and Adams and Fuller's (2007) replies to them, and my assessment of these arguments and replies. Finally, in section 4, I develop my arguments against the Pragmatic Explanation View. In particular, I argue that the Pragmatic Explanation View (i) does not answer some of the previous problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism and the Gappy Proposition View, (ii) turns some unproblematic cases for Neo-Russellianism into new problems, and (iii) identifies some propositions as pragmatic implicatures of utterances of sentences containing empty names when these propositions do not have two important characteristics of pragmatic implicatures. Therefore, I conclude that, the Pragmatic Explanation View, as a defense of Neo-Russellianism and the Gappy Proposition View, should be resisted.

§3.1. The Pragmatic Explanation View

The Pragmatic Explanation View, roughly speaking, is the view according to which competent and rational speakers widely and systematically conflate some descriptive propositions pragmatically implicated by utterances of sentences containing empty names with the semantic contents of such sentences. Many (Fred Adams, Garry Fuller, Robert Stecker, Laura Dietrich, and, in a slightly different form, Kenneth Taylor) have defended Neo-Russellianism and the Gappy Proposition View by the Pragmatic Explanation View. According to this defense, all atomic sentences containing (genuinely) empty names semantically express gappy propositions, or some nonstandard Russellian propositions; however, competent and rational speakers' utterances of such sentences pragmatically implicate some standard descriptive propositions. These implicated descriptive propositions explain the intuitions of competent and rational language users concerning the content and truth of sentences containing empty names. Since competent and rational language users widely and systematically conflate the semantic content of a sentence containing an empty name with what is pragmatically implicated by an utterance of that sentence, they usually have mistaken intuitions about such sentences.

Among different presentations of the Pragmatic Explanation View, I focus on a recent formulation by Adams and Dietrich (2004).[2] The key points of Adams and Dietrich's view go like this (2004; 125-7):

(i) "Associated with all names (empty or filled) there will be sets of descriptions that we will call the *lore* [3] associated with the name."

(ii) "None of these descriptions [or any set of them] give the meanings of the names.

(iii)"Names contribute only their bearers to the propositions [semantically] expressed by their use." (Millianism)

(iv)"The Descriptions [lores] become associated with names by learning." (Learned Associations)

(v) "These psychological associations [between lores and names] can explain why names (empty or filled) can seem to have meanings other than their bearers. [4]"; in other words, "one may come to think that one or more of these descriptions […] gives the meaning of a name."

(vi) When we utter a sentence containing a name, we *pragmatically imply* other propositions that would be expressed by taking a description associated with the name and substituting. (Pragmatic Implications)

(vii) One may *mistakenly* come to think that what a sentence *semantically expresses* (in the relevant context of use) is what he/she *pragmatically implies* by uttering that sentence on an occasion of use. (Semantic-Pragmatic Mistakes)

(viii) Therefore, "one may come to think that one can express a truth using a vacuous [i.e. empty] name […], whereas one at best pragmatically implicates a truth."

Here, by way of example, is how the Pragmatic Explanation View replies to the problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism and the Gappy Proposition View:

> There is a lore associated with empty names as well as with filled [names]. Nearly all of us learn the Greek Myths. We learn the Pegasus lore, and, thereby, come to associate 'the winged horse of Greek mythology' with the name 'Pegasus'. When we utter 'Pegasus flies', although we literally express the incomplete proposition <___, flies> , we pragmatically imply complete propositions that would be expressed by taking a description associated with the name and substituting. So, for example, we pragmatically imply that the

> winged horse of Greek mythology flies. And if we utter 'Pegasus does not exist', we pragmatically imply that the winged horse of Greek mythology does not exist. We claim that this latter implied proposition is complete, true, and its truth misleadingly inclines us to think that a sentence such as 'Pegasus does not exist' says something true.
>
> (Adams & Dietrich; 2004, 26)

The Pragmatic Explanation View answers some important unanswered problems left for Neo-Russellianism and the Gappy Proposition View. In the next section, I will discuss three of such problems.

§3.2. The Strength of the Pragmatic Explanation View

Here are three issues raised by empty names which are not properly answered by Neo-Russellianism and the Gappy Proposition View. The Pragmatic Explanation View, however, replies to them. I do not intend to imply that these replies demonstrate the coherency or success of the view in general. Nevertheless, they *may* indicate the strength of the Pragmatic Explanation View over alternative Neo-Russellian approaches to the problems raised by empty names.

1. The Problem of Apparent *Completeness of the Content* of a(n Atomic Simple) Sentence[5] Containing an Empty Name

Consider:

(1) Pegasus flies.

According to the Gappy Proposition View, the semantic content of (1) is a gappy proposition. A gappy proposition is an incomplete proposition. Therefore, the content of (1) is incomplete. However, there is a widespread intuition that (1) has a complete meaning. Hence, there is a widespread intuition that the content of (1) is complete. Therefore, given the validity of this intuition, the Gappy Proposition View is not correct.

The Pragmatic Explanation View's reply to this problem goes like this. (1) semantically expresses a gappy proposition which can be represented by:

(1p) <___, Flies>

Therefore it is true that the semantic content of (1) is incomplete. The widespread intuition, however, is misleading: (1), from a semantic point of view, does not have a complete meaning. Nevertheless, an utterance of (1), on an occasion of use, can pragmatically imply a complete proposition and hence have a complete meaning. Adams and Dietrich (2004; 126), then, provide the following explanation for the widespread intuition.

Explanation 1:

(i) One of the descriptions associated with the name 'Pegasus', for example, is 'the winged horse of Greek mythology'.

(ii) The description 'the winged horse of Greek mythology' does not give the meaning (semantic content) of 'Pegasus' ('Pegasus' does not have a semantic content).

(iii)We learn that the description 'the winged horse of Greek mythology' is associated with the name 'Pegasus' by learning the Greek Myths and come to associate the description with the name.

(iv)On the particular occasion of use that we are concerned with, we associate the description 'the winged horse of Greek mythology' with the name 'Pegasus' as well.

(v) Therefore, by uttering (1) we pragmatically imply the complete proposition that would be expressed by (1').

(1') The winged horse of Greek mythology flies.

Call the proposition semantically expressed by (1') '(1'p)'.

(vi)Competent and rational speakers are widely and systematically confused about what is semantically expressed by a sentence they utter and what is pragmatically implied by their utterance.

(vii) Therefore, competent and rational speakers may mistakenly come to think that (1) semantically expresses (1'p).

(viii) Then, the intuition that (1) has a complete content (when it has an incomplete semantic content) is due to the confusion between (1p) and (1'p).

Explanation 1 explains the intuition concerning the completeness of the content of an atomic simple sentence containing an empty name without violating Neo-Russellianism, slipping into Neo-Fregeanism, or assuming Neo-Meinongianism. If the Pragmatic Explanation View were correct, then the above explanation would appear promising.

2. The Problem of Apparent *Truth Value* of a(n Atomic Simple) Sentence Containing an Empty Name

Consider:

(2) Vulcan exists.

(3) Vulcan is nonexistent.

According to the Gappy Proposition View, (2) and (3) semantically express gappy propositions. Gappy propositions do not have standard complete semantic contents. Given that sentences that do not have standard complete semantic contents are neither true nor false, (2) and (3) are neither true nor false. However, there is a widespread intuition that (2) is false and (3) is true. Therefore, given the validity of this intuition, the Gappy Proposition View is not correct.

The Pragmatic Explanation View's reply to this problem goes like this. It is true that (2) and (3) semantically express gappy propositions that can respectively be represented by:[6]

(2p) <___, Existence>

(3p) <___, Nonexistence>

It is also true that sentences that do not have the standard complete semantic contents are neither true nor false.[7] Therefore, from a semantic point of view, (2) and (3) are neither true nor false. The widespread intuition, however, is misleading. The intuition about the truth values of (2) and (3) can be explained in terms of the truth values of the descriptive propositions pragmatically implied by utterances of (2) and (3). This explanation relies on the claim that competent and rational speakers widely and systematically confuse the semantic contents of (2) and (3) with the descriptive propositions pragmatically implied by their utterances of such sentences. This explanation, call it 'Explanation 2', goes like the Explanation 1 above. To avoid repetition, I do not go through it.

3. The Problem of Apparent *Difference* in the *Content* of (Atomic Simple) Sentences Only Differing in One (or Some) Empty Names

Consider:

(4) Santa Claus is nonexistent.

(5) Superman is nonexistent.

According to the Gappy Proposition View, (4) and (5) semantically express the same gappy proposition. Therefore, (4) and (5) have the same content. However, there is a widespread intuition that (4) and (5) have different meanings. Hence, there is a widespread intuition that (4) and (5) have different contents. Therefore, given the validity of this intuition, the Gappy Proposition View is not correct.

The Pragmatic Explanation View's reply to this problem goes like this. (4) and (5) semantically express the same gappy proposition that can be represented by:

(4/5p) <____, Nonexistence>

Therefore, it is true that they have the same semantic content. The widespread intuition, however, is misleading: (4) and (5), from a semantic point of view, do not have different contents. Nevertheless, on an occasion of use, an utterance of (4) may pragmatically imply a complete proposition that is different from what an utterance of (5) may pragmatically imply. The Pragmatic Explanation View can provide the following explanation for the widespread intuition.

Explanation 3:

(i) 'Santa Claus' is associated with a lore containing descriptions like: 'the jolly fat man who lives at the North Pole and brings presents to the world's children on Christmas day', 'the man with the read suit and white beard who drives a sleigh pulled eight reindeer', etc. Likewise, 'Superman' is associated with a lore containing descriptions like: 'the man of steel', 'the man from Krypton', 'the man who is faster than a speeding bullet and more powerful than a locomotive', etc.

(ii) The descriptions in the lore of 'Santa Claus' do not give the meaning (semantic content) of 'Santa Claus' ('Santa Claus' does not have a semantic content). Likewise, the descriptions in the lore of 'Superman' do not give the meaning (semantic content) of 'Superman' ('Superman' does not have a semantic content).

(iii)We learn the descriptions in the lore of 'Santa Claus' by learning Santa Claus story and come to associate those descriptions with the name 'Santa Claus'. Likewise, we learn the descriptions in the lore of 'Superman' by learning Superman story and come to associate those descriptions with the name 'Superman'.

(iv)On the particular occasion of use that we are concerned with, we associate the description 'the jolly fat man who lives at the North Pole and brings presents to the world's children on Christmas day' (or something like this) with the name 'Santa Claus'. Likewise, on the particular occasion of use that we are concerned with, we associate the description 'the man who is faster than a speeding bullet and more powerful than a locomotive' (or something like this) with the name 'Superman'.

(v) Therefore, by uttering (4) we pragmatically imply the complete proposition that would be expressed by (4'):

(4') The jolly fat man who lives at the North Pole and brings presents to the world's children on Christmas day is nonexistent.

Call the proposition semantically expressed by (4') '(4'p)'.

Likewise, by uttering (5) we pragmatically imply the complete proposition that would be expressed by (5'):

(5') The man who is faster than a speeding bullet and more powerful than a locomotive is nonexistent.

Call the proposition semantically expressed by (5') '(5'p)'.

(vi)Competent and rational speakers are deeply and widely confused about what is semantically expressed by a sentence they utter and what is pragmatically implied by their utterances. Therefore, competent and rational speakers may mistakenly come to think that (4) semantically expresses (4`p) and (5) semantically expresses (5`p).

(vii) The intuition that (4) and (5) have different contents (when they have the same semantic content) is due to our confusion between the semantic content of (4) and (4`p) on the one hand and the semantic content of (5) and (5`p) on the other hand. Since the content of (4`p) is different from the content of (5`p), we mistakenly come to think that the semantic content of (4) is different from the semantic content of (5).

The above replies to the problems 1-3, in particular Explanations 1-3, would appear promising if the Pragmatic Explanation View were correct. They neither slip into Neo-Fregeanism nor require Neo-Meinongianism. They save Neo-Russellianism and are consistent with the Gappy Proposition View. Therefore, such replies and explanations may demonstrate the advantage of the Pragmatic Explanation View over alternative Neo-Russellian approaches. Nevertheless, the Pragmatic Explanation View has been criticized on different grounds. Particularly, the view has been criticized by Braun (1993), Taylor (2000), Reimer (2001), Everett (2003), and Green (2007). Adams and Dietrich (2004) and Adams and Fuller (2007) have tried to reply to these criticisms. In the next section, I try to assess these criticisms and replies.

§3.3. Previous Arguments against the Pragmatic Explanation View

In what follows, I explain seven criticisms of the Pragmatic Explanation View offered by the above-mentioned philosophers and discuss the pros and cons of the corresponding replies provided by the proponents of the Pragmatic Explanation View. Through this I try to explain why I do not heavily rely on these criticisms of the Pragmatic Explanation View even though I do not agree with the replies provided by Adams and Dietrich (2004) and Adams and Fuller (2007).

3.3.1. Argument from no semantic content

Kenneth Taylor's (2000) argument against Adams et al.'s (1994; 1997) view goes like this. "Gricean implicatures are always generated with the mediating intervention of something strictly literally said distinct from what is merely implicated." Since there is no such a distinct proposition in the case of genuinely empty names, Gricean implicatures are not generated.

Adams and Dietrich (2004), in reply, deny that the generation of a Gricean implicature needs intervention of some *complete* proposition semantically or literally expressed. In their words, "Grice nowhere said implicature could not take place via something less than a complete proposition." Therefore, it seems that gappy propositions can be the things that are "strictly literally said distinct from what is merely implicated".

Nevertheless, as Green (2007, 426) points out, it seems that Adams and Dietrich are mistaken in the above claim; the very definition of conversational implicature requires an agent to say or make as if to say that p (Grice; 1989, 30). In this definition, 'p' can only be substituted by a sentence with a complete content. Hence, it seems that the generation of a Gricean conversational implicature needs the intervention of some complete proposition.

That Adams and Dietrich's reply might not be completely true, however, does not imply that Taylor's criticism provides a knockdown objection to the Pragmatic Explanation View. There are two ways out of the problem. First, one may follow Green (2007) and slightly modify the definition of Gricean conversational implicatures in a way that 'p' can be substituted by a sub-sentential expression or sentences with incomplete contents. Then this modified definition of conversational implicatures seems to be faithful to the overall structure of Grice's theory and works in accordance with Adams and Dietrich's view. Another solution is to follow Taylor's own proposal. Following Recanati's (1993) distinction between primary and secondary pragmatic processes, Kenneth Taylor (2000) introduces one and half stage pragmatic processes. Taylor explains the descriptive content pragmatically implicated by an utterance of a sentence containing a genuinely empty name through a one and half stage pragmatic process by means of *propositions-in-waiting* and the relation of *pseudo-assertion*. Propositions-in-waiting, though similar with them in some respects, are not gappy propositions. Pseudo-assertions, in turn, are introduced in terms of another relation, pseudo-expression. The advantage of Taylor's view is that it keeps the standard definition of Gricean conversational implicatures and acknowledges that since one who utters an atomic sentence containing a genuinely empty name asserts no proposition at all, Gricean conversational implicatures cannot explain the descriptive content pragmatically implicated. The disadvantage of the view, however, is that we should add one more level of complication to our pragmatics, i.e. one and half stage pragmatic processes. Modifying Grice's definition of pragmatic implicatures or introducing a new kind of pragmatic processes, though may require some slight changes in the Pragmatic Explanation View, seems to save the view from the above criticism.

3.3.2. Argument from unrectifiablity of intuition

David Braun (1993, 460) and Marga Reimer (2001, 235) have mentioned the following difficulty for the Pragmatic Explanation View. In the cases in which competent and rational speakers mistake what is semantically expressed with what is pragmatically implicated, after appropriate and relevant philosophical training about the semantics-pragmatics distinction, competent and rational speakers are usually able to recognize their initial confusion. This is not true in the cases in which competent and rational speakers have specific intuitions concerning the content and truth of sentences containing empty names, or utterances of such sentences. Such intuitions are too strong to be rectified by philosophical training about the semantics-pragmatics distinction. This suggests that such intuitions are unlikely to be due to the semantics-pragmatics confusion.

Green (2007; 431-2), though rejecting the Pragmatic Explanation View, argues that the above criticism can be defused. He argues that our intuitions concerning what speakers say are not sensitive to "our being convinced by various theories, for instance those in philosophy of language." This, in turn, is because "most language processing, at syntactic, semantic, and even pragmatic levels is unconscious (more specifically 'pre conscious') and precedes outsides conscious awareness." As Green has pointed out, the latter claim is supported by recent data from experimental psychology. Therefore, the premise that 'after appropriate and relevant philosophical training about the semantics-pragmatics distinction competent and rational speakers are usually able to recognize their initial confusion between what is semantically expressed and what is pragmatically implicated' is false. Such philosophical training "leaves pretty much intact our judgments about the truth conditions of sentences such as those under consideration."

To my eye, however, Green's point does not completely defuse the above criticism of the Pragmatic Explanation View. It might be true that most of language processing at syntactic, semantic, and even pragmatic levels happens pre-consciously. It also might be true that when *ordinary* competent and rational speakers mistake what is semantically expressed with what is pragmatically implicated, they are *not* usually able to rectify their initial confusion even after appropriate and relevant philosophical training. From these premises, however, it does not follow that these intuitions are not rectifiable; it seems that such intuitions should be rectifiable at least for *sophisticated* competent and rational speakers, e.g. linguists and philosophers of language, under appropriate circumstances – otherwise it is not obvious on what ground such institutions are considered as *confusions*. The problem for the Pragmatic Explanation View, then, is not that ordinary competent and rational speakers are not able to rectify their intuitions concerning the content and truth of sentences containing genuinely empty names after appropriate philosophical training; the problem, rather, is that many sophisticated competent and rational speakers are not also able to rectify such intuitions. This suggests that such intuitions are unlikely to be due to the semantics-pragmatics confusion.

3.3.3. Argument from modal intuitions

Everett (2003) has argued that the Pragmatic Explanation View does not properly account for our intuition concerning the modal profile of atomic simple sentences containing (genuinely) empty names. Everett's argument goes like this. Consider an utterance of:

(i) Santa is F.

According to the Pragmatic Explanation View, the intuition of a competent and rational speaker concerning the *content* and *truth value* of (i), on an occasion of use, should be explained by the content and truth value of:

(i`) The G is F.

given that ⌜the G⌝ is the description associated with 'Santa' by the speaker. Now, consider:

(ii) Santa is John Perry.

In a similar way, the intuition of the competent and rational speaker concerning the *content* and *truth value* of (ii), on an occasion of use, should be explained by the content and truth value of:

(ii`) The G is John Perry.

However, the *modal profile* of (ii) seems to be different from the modal profile of (ii`); (ii) is necessarily false; "there is no possible circumstance in which John Perry is Santa Claus" but (ii`) is not necessarily false. This, as Everett argues, raises two problems for the Pragmatic Explanation View: First, how to explain our intuition concerning the modal profile of (ii)? Second, if our intuitions concerning the modal profile of (ii) do not arise from our intuition concerning the modal profile of (ii`), then we do not conflate the content of (ii) with the content of (ii`) when we are concerned with the modal profile of (ii). Then, why should we conflate the content of (ii) with the content of (ii`) when we are concerned with the *content* and *truth value* of (ii)?

Adams and Dietrich's (2004) replies to these questions, roughly speaking, go like this. In reply to the first problem, our intuition concerning the modal profile of (ii) is explained by our semantic intuition with respect to sentences of the *form* 'a=b'. The intuition concerning the modal profile of (ii), properly speaking, is this: "if it expresses a truth, it expresses a necessary truth, and if it expresses a falsehood, it expresses a necessary falsehood." In other words, "the intuition of necessity comes form the logical form of the expression" (137). And since we know that 'Santa Claus' and 'John Perry' do not name the same individual, we have the intuition that (ii) is false. As a result, we come up with the intuition that (ii) is necessary false. In reply to the second problem, Adams and Dietrich simply points out that "there is no reason why the exact same mechanisms that explain one's intuitions of truth are the ones that explain one's modal intuitions" (137).

To my view, Adams and Dietrich's replies are not completely successful. Part of their reply to Everett's first question requires that our *intuition concerning the falsehood of* (ii) is due to our knowledge that 'Santa Claus' and 'John Perry' do not name the same individual. However, according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, this intuition should arise from our *intuition concerning the truth value of* (ii`), rather than that 'Santa Claus' and 'John Perry' are not co-referential, if we widely and systematically mistake the content of (ii) with (ii`). As I will explain later on, by an argument similar to the semantic objection to the Description Theory (of content) for proper names, it can be shown that (ii`) is not false in general; one may mistakenly associate a description ⌜the G⌝ with the name 'Socrates' in a way that (ii`) accidentally comes out true. Therefore, it seems that the explanation of the intuition of the falsehood of (ii) does not need to be explained in terms of our conflation between the content of (ii) and (ii`). This may seem to be in agreement with Adams and Dietrich's reply to the second problem when they suggest that there are different mechanisms explaining one's intuition of truth on the one hand and one's intuition of modality on the other hand. It is not so however; our intuition concerning the falsehood of (ii) is not an intuition concerning the modality of (ii). This is an intuition concerning the truth value of (ii). If our *intuition concerning the truth* of a sentence containing an empty name is supposed to be explained in terms of our conflation between the semantic content of the sentence in question and what is pragmatically implicated by an utterance of that sentence, we expect that the same goes with our *intuition concerning the falsehood* of a similar sentence. It seems highly implausible to explain our intuition concerning the truth of a sentence containing an empty name in one way, i.e. in terms of our conflation between the semantic content of the sentence and what is pragmatically implicated by an utterance of that sentence, and our intuition concerning the falsehood of the sentence in another way, i.e. in terms of our knowledge of non-co-referentiality of the proper names occurred in the sentence.

Having said that, I suspect that Adams and Dietrich's explanation of the role of the *form* of the sentence schema 'a=b' in our intuition concerning the modal profile of

(ii) is on the right track. Moreover, I doubt that competent and rational ordinary speakers uniformly hold the intuition that (ii) is necessarily false, as Everett presupposes. What intuition competent and rational ordinary speakers have concerning the modal profile of (ii) seems to be hard to determine. To my eye, it does not seem very unlikely if it will turn out that some competent and rational ordinary speakers take (ii) to be contingently false. If so, then the Pragmatic Explanation View has a promising explanation: such speakers conflate the content of (ii) with the content of (ii`) when they are concerned with the modal profile of (ii) – as well as when they are concerned with the content and truth value of (ii). This, then, may support the Pragmatic Explanation View, rather undermining it.

To conclude, although I do not think that Adams and Dietrich's replies to the above criticisms are completely successful, I do not find Everett's argument against the Pragmatic Explanation View conclusive either. Regarding the main problem posed by Everett's first question, how to explain our intuition concerning the modal profile of (ii), two points should be noted. First, it is not obvious that ordinary competent and rational speakers hold the same modal intuition as the one Everett presupposes. And second, even if they do, the logical form of identity sentences may play a major role in the explanation of the intuition in question.

3.3.4. Argument from stability of content

Everett (2003) has also argued that the Pragmatic Explanation View encounters another difficulty: "we take the propositional content of utterances containing empty names to be stable across speakers and times in a way that the descriptions we associate with those names are not" (25). You may associate a lore with 'Faust' which is radically different from the lore I associate with it; nevertheless, we have the intuition that an utterance of 'Faust is nonexistent' by you, in some sense, *says the same thing* as my utterance of it. The same story goes for a single speaker who associates radically different lores with 'Faust', or any other empty name, over time. In short, the intuition of same-saying between different utterances of a sentence containing an empty name is not properly explained by the Pragmatic Explanation

View when the descriptions associated with the empty name in question, on different occasions of use, are radically different.

Adams and Dietrich (2004) have replied to this problem in two ways. First, they have tried to account for the intuition of same-saying by means of the sameness of the gappy proposition semantically expressed by the atomic sentence containing the empty name. So, for example, they say:

> First, on our account the semantic content of 'Faust doesn't exist' is stable across times and speakers. Everett's utterance, Ken's or Gary's all express the same incomplete proposition <___, non-existence>. So our account does explain the sameness of semantic content.
>
> (Adams & Dietrich; 2004, 129)

Though the above quote only says that the Pragmatic Explanation View explains the *sameness of semantic content* in terms of the gappy proposition expressed, in the context of Adams and Dietrich's discussion, this has been intended to say that the Pragmatic Explanation View explains *the intuition of* the sameness of semantic content (or "the *seeming* stability of content of utterances containing empty names across times and speakers", my emphasis) in the same way.

Second, Adams and Dietrich (2004) have tried to account for the intuition of same-saying by means of some common description associated with an empty name on different occasions of use. So, for example, they (2004, 130) say:

> Now won't there be different pragmatic implications of the utterances by Everett of 'Faust does not exist' over time, due to the differences of descriptions associated? Yes. Will the descriptions be so different that there is nothing in common implied by Everett's cross-temporal utterances? Probably not. If Everett's use of the name 'Faust' on both occasions traces back to Goethe's use of 'Faust', then there is good reason to think that Everett's [pragmatic] implications are about the same Faust. Everett himself may associate with 'Faust' on both occasions that this is 'a central figure in Goethe's work of the same name'. The causal history of Everett's use tracing back to Goethe's use preserves that much – that Everett is imparting information about the same Faust.

To my eye, none of the above responses is successful. Consider the first reply. According to the Pragmatic Explanation View our intuitions concerning the completeness, distinctiveness, and truth value of the content of atomic simple sentences containing empty names are explained in terms of the completeness, distinctiveness, and truth value of the propositions pragmatically implied by utterances of such sentences (see §1. and §2.). If so, as Everett (2003; 27-8) has argued, then our *intuition concerning the sameness of the content* of such sentences should be explained in the same way. Otherwise the Pragmatic Explanation View seems problematic. In particular, if our *intuition concerning the truth value* of an atomic simple sentence containing an empty name is explained in terms of the truth value of the proposition pragmatically implicated by an utterance of that sentence, since the intuition about truth value requires some intuition about content, the proposition pragmatically implicated should also be responsible for our intuition about the content of that sentence. But this contradicts the claim that the gappy proposition *semantically expressed* by the sentence in question is responsible for our intuition about the sameness of the content of the sentence across times and speakers. Consider the second reply. Though our intuition concerning the same-saying of Everett's cross-temporal utterances of 'Faust does not exist' may be explained by the common descriptive content of 'the central figure in Goethe's work named 'Faust' does not exist', I doubt that the content of latter is *pragmatically implied* by Everett's utterance of the former and then *recovered* by us. I have explained my doubt with this regard in §4.3.

To conclude, I suspect that Adams and Dietrich's replies to Everett's criticism are not successful, though my reasons might be different from Everett's; however, I doubt Everett's conclusion too. Everett (2003, 27) concludes:

> One might argue that we take the various utterances of "Faust does not exist" to share their propositional content because the tokens of the name "Faust" which they contain share a historical connection. […] This, I think, is the right track to take and I take it in my (Everett, 2000).

It seems to me that the mere fact that "various utterances of 'Faust does not exist'…share a historical connection" is not sufficient to explain our intuition concerning the sameness of the content of such utterances. There might be utterances of sentences only differing in some proper names with a shared historical connection that do not raise similar intuitions of same-saying. If *we* hold the intuition of same-saying with regard to utterances in question, it seems that *our belief* concerning this matter, i.e. the shared historical connection, plays an important role in the explanation of *our* intuition of same-saying. This, in turn, *may* indicate that these various utterances have a common descriptive content – though by no means do I intend to say that there is a straightforward argument to this conclusion. For this reason, I am not sure that I am in agreement with Everett's result. On the other hand, even if there is some common descriptive content in play, it does not follow that this common descriptive content is *pragmatically implied* by the speakers' various utterances and then *recovered by us*, as who hold the intuition of same-saying. So I disagree with the Pragmatic Explanation View as well.

3.3.5. Argument from no descriptive content

Another argument against the Pragmatic Explanation View, also proposed by Everett (2003), goes like this. The Pragmatic Explanation View does not answer an important problem raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism and the Gappy Proposition View. Here is the problem. There are cases in which a competent and rational speaker associates no description with an empty name; nevertheless, her utterance seems to say something true. Since the semantic content of an atomic simple sentence containing an empty name is a gappy proposition and gappy propositions are neither true nor false according the Pragmatic Explanation View, the truth in question cannot be accounted for by the semantic content of the sentence uttered. Since there is no description associated with the empty name, no proposition is pragmatically implicated by the utterance of the sentence in question. So, the Pragmatic Explanation View does not explain the intuition concerning the truth of what is said. Everett (2003, 28-30) explains the problem as follows:[8]

> Finally consider those cases where we seem to assign no descriptive content to an empty name. Peter is making up a story about someone called "Henri". Stacie and I hear him use the name "Henri" but we do not listen to what he is saying and we associate no descriptive conditions with the name. A long time passes, Stacie and I remember hearing the name "Henri" but we do not remember where we heard it. I say to Stacie:
>
> (6) Henri does not exist.
>
> I have spoken truly. But what is the truth my utterance of (6) communicated to her? What could the pragmatically conveyed true descriptive claim be? […] I suggested that the pragmatic theorist faces a difficulty accounting for our intuitions concerning my utterances of (6). For it is far from clear what claim this utterance might pragmatically convey. I considered a number of alternatives but argued that none of these matched our intuitions concerning what my utterance of (6) says.

Adams and Dietrich (2004) have discussed the problem with respect to three different circumstances. First, if the speaker can only remember the name of the one from whom she has heard the name, then there is some description to be associated with the name (2004, 131-2). Second, even if the speaker cannot remember the origin of her use of the name, if she can only remember that she has heard the name from *someone*, then there is some description to be associated with the name (2004, 132). And third, if the speaker literally does not associate any description with the name in question, there is no intuition to be explained (2004, 133).

In my view, though I may not agree with the details of their reply (for example, about the role of gappy propositions in the explanation of our intuition about the sameness of the content), Adams and Dietrich's reply to Everett's criticism is on the right track. The point which seems to be absent from both Everett's and Adams and Dietrich's discussions is the distinction between the intuition of the speaker, the intuition of the hearer, and the intuition of a third person, neither the speaker nor the hearer. Whoever has the intuition of the truth of an utterance of a sentence, the speaker, the hearer, or a third person, should have some intuition about the content of the sentence uttered. This intuition about the content, in turn, *might* be explainable in terms of some descriptive content. From this, however, it does not follow that the relationship between the descriptive content and the utterance of the sentence in question is pragmatic implication.

3.3.6. Argument form cancelability of conversational implicatures

Green (2007) has also argued against the Pragmatic Explanation View. Consider the version of Pragmatic Explanation View according to which pragmatic implicatures are Gricean conversational implicatures. (This is the version Adams and Dietrich (2004) and Adams and Fuller (2007) have defended). Green's argument against this version goes like this. Given that the Pragmatic Explanation View is correct, the intuition of competent and rational speakers concerning the meaningfulness and truth value of a sentence containing an empty name is due to semantics-pragmatics confusion; competent and rational speakers have the *illusion* that a sentence containing an empty name is meaningful or has a specific truth value since they mistake what is semantically expressed by it with what is pragmatically implicated by an utterance of it. In particular, competent and rational speakers mistake the *incomplete* proposition semantically expressed by a sentence containing an empty name with the *descriptive* proposition pragmatically implicated by an utterance of that sentence. Let us assume that this is the correct explanation of the illusion of meaningfulness and truth evaluability of sentences containing empty names. According to Grice's theory, conversational implicatures are cancelable; in other words, cancelability is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for conversational implicatures. Therefore, the descriptive proposition pragmatically implicated by an utterance of a sentence containing an empty name should be cancelable. Hence, there should be some context in which the descriptive proposition pragmatically implicated is cancelable. But if the illusions of meaningfulness and truth evaluability are due to a mistake between the semantic content of the sentence and the descriptive proposition pragmatically implicated by an utterance of it, such illusions should be removed by canceling the descriptive proposition in question. This, however, is not the case. Green (2007; 436-9) provides different examples that the alleged descriptive propositions might be cancelled in appropriate contexts while the intuitions of meaningfulness and truth evaluability persist. For example, assume that Le Verrier associates the lore 'the planet between Mercury and the Sun' with the name 'Vulcan'. Then, according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, Le Verrier has the intuition that

(2) Vulcan exists.

is meaningful since he mistakes the semantic content of (2) with the content of

(7) There is a planet between Mercury and the Sun.

which is pragmatically implicated by an utterance of (2). But since by assumption the content of (7) is conversationally implicated by an utterance of (2), it is cancelable in some appropriate context. For instance, consider this context. Based on his original calculations, Le Verrier firmly believes that Vulcan exists. However, his recent observations lead him to believe that Vulcan has left its original orbit and is no longer between Mercury and the Sun. He, then, may sincerely assert:

(8) Vulcan exists but there is no planet between Mercury and the Sun.

According to the Pragmatic Explanation View, the illusion of meaningfulness of (2) should be removed when the conversationally implicated descriptive proposition accounting for this illusion has been cancelled. In other words, the illusion of meaningfulness of (2) should be removed when (2) occurs as part of (8) in the above context. However, it is not the case; the intuition of meaningfulness of (2) persists.

As another example, consider:

(9) Vulcan does not exist.

Le Verrier, according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, has the intuition that (9) is meaningful since he mistakes the semantic content of (9) with the content of:

(10) There is no planet between Mercury and the Sun.

which is pragmatically implicated by an utterance of (9). But then consider the following context in which the content of (10) can be cancelled from the content of (9): one day Le Verrier realizes that he has made a crucial error in his previous calculations and there is no Vulcan. He corrects the error and concludes that there is a planet with properties totally different from properties ascribed to Vulcan between Mercury and the Sun. He, then, may sincerely assert:

(11) Vulcan does not exist but there is a planet between Mercury and the Sun.

If the illusion of meaningfulness of (9) was due to a mistake between the content of (9) and the content of (10), this illusion should be removed in (11), in the above context, when the content of (10) is cancelled from the content of (9). However, the intuition of the meaningfulness of (9) persists even when it occurs as part of (11).

Furthermore, Green argues that even a meta-linguistic lore made out of the property of being called 'N', associated with the name 'N', cannot provide the kind of descriptive content the Pragmatic Explanation View requires. His argument for this claim goes like this:

> […] whereas conversational implicata are cancelable, it is hard to see what sense it makes to say
>
> (12) Zeus is not called 'Zeus'.
>
> This sentence is not a self-contradiction. It might, for instance, be used as to say something true if the unquoted occurrence of the name is used as a one-off referring device while the property of being called 'N' only applies to those objects around which conventional referring practices have grown. On the other hand, if it is common knowledge that the name 'Zeus' does have an established usage, the above sentence is false, and self-evidently so. Conversational implicatures, by contrast, can be cancelled without the speaker saying something false – not to mention self-evidently false. Thus a speaker should be able to say 'Zeus throws thunderbolts, though Zeus is not called "Zeus"' without being in error by virtue of the falsity of her second conjunct. Yet, when 'Zeus' is not being used as a one-off referring device, it is not something he [, the speaker,] can do.
>
> (Green; 2007, 437)

Finally, Green extends his argument to show that even a cluster of descriptions associated with an empty name cannot provide the kind of descriptive content the Pragmatic Explanation View requires. The basic idea is that one may still perform a felicitous speech act while also denying all or most of descriptions associated with an empty name (438).

Adams and Fuller's (2007; 454) reply to the first criticism goes like this: "an obvious objection to Green's argument that the antecedents of Le Verrier's first two utterances above, (8) and (11), are not cancelable is that Green is wrong about the relevant descriptions that Le Verrier has attached to 'Vulcan'." They suggest that when Le Verrier introduces the name 'Vulcan' the appropriate lore associated with it contains descriptions like 'the planet that is *now* between Mercury and the Sun' and 'the planet that *now* orbits the Sun'. Then, they continue: "What is important is that these associated descriptions contain the temporal indicator 'now'. On this plausible account of the matter neither (8) nor (11) cancels Le Verrier's associated descriptions, even partially."

The first part of Adams and Fuller's reply, when they write that "Green's argument that the antecedents of Le Verrier's first two utterances above, (8) and (11), are not cancelable", may misrepresent Green's objection. Green does not argue that the antecedent of (8) and (11) are not cancelable. He argues that the associated descriptive contents accounting for the illusions of meaningfulness of the antecedents of (8) and (11), according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, can be cancelled without the illusions being removed. This suggests that the associated descriptive contents do not explain the illusions in question. The main part of Adams and Fuller's reply, however, seems to work. If the lore originally associated with 'Vulcan' by Le Verrier contains the temporal indicator 'now' then depending on the time of the introduction of the name we have a description which has a different content from the content of 'the planet between Mercury and the Sun'. In this case the second conjuncts of (8) and (11) do not cancel the descriptive contents pragmatically implicated by the utterances of their antecedents. So, in the above contexts, the illusions of meaningfulness of their antecedents remain because the propositions pragmatically implicated are not completely cancelled.

In reply to the second objection, Adams and Fuller share Green's assumption that the Gricean Conversational implicatures can be cancelled without the speaker saying something false. Then they argue that even if 'Zeus' is associated with a lore made out of 'being called 'Zeus'', Green is wrong about what is pragmatically implicated by an utterance of 'Zeus throws thunderbolts'. What is pragmatically implicated by this utterance is 'there is a *unique* God called 'Zeus''. Then to cancel this implicature, we should utter 'Zeus throws thunderbolts but there is no unique God called 'Zeus''. Here we have cancelled the pragmatic implicature without saying something false. In other words, the sentence canceling the conversational implicature of 'Zeus throws thunderbolts' is not 'Zeus is not called 'Zeus'' as Green has claimed. This latter sentence, according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, is neither true nor false since the first occurrence of 'Zeus' is an empty name by assumption. The canceling sentence proposed by Adams and Fuller, 'there is no unique God called 'Zeus', however, is true.

Since Adams and Fuller's reply seems promising, one may conclude that the Pragmatic Explanation View is immune from every argument along the above lines. This does not seem to be true. At the end, from Green's arguments and Adams and Fuller's replies to them, I try to extract a general problem for the Pragmatic Explanation View and a possible reply to that. Through introducing this general problem and its reply, I hope to point out where I disagree with Green as well as how I think a successful argument against the Pragmatic Explanation View can be developed.

Consider an atomic simple sentence 'P' containing a genuinely empty name. Call the sentence expressing the alleged pragmatically implicated content by an utterance of 'P', according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, 'Q'. Think of 'P' as 'Vulcan does not exist' and 'Q' as 'the planet between Mercury and the Sun does not exist'. If the Pragmatic Explanation View is correct, then the intuition of ordinary speakers concerning the meaningfulness of 'P' is due to their systematic confusion between the content of 'P' and the content of 'Q'. Then, one, following Green, may try to argue that there are contexts in which the content of 'Q' can be cancelled from the content of 'P' in a sentence of the form 'P but not Q', without saying something false, when the intuition of meaningfulness of 'P' still persists. This may suggest that the intuition of meaningfulness of 'P' is not due to the alleged confusion.

To see exactly how the above argument works against the Pragmatic Explanation View, let me distinguish between two different claims of this view ('P' and 'Q' are used as I introduced them above):

(i) The content of 'Q' *is pragmatically implicated* by a specific utterance of 'P'.

(ii) The content of 'Q' *accounts for the intuition* of ordinary speakers about the content of 'P'.

If one is successful in showing that there are contexts in which the intuition of meaningfulness of 'P' persists even when 'P' occurs in a sentence of the form 'P but not Q', without this sentence being false, it may undermine (ii), but not (i). In fact, if there are such contexts, the above phenomenon *may* support (i) rather than undermining it. This, in turn, is because the above phenomenon suggests that 'Q' is properly cancelable. (We should, however, consider this point. Though it is true that if something is pragmatically implicated then it is (usually) cancelable, it is not true that if something is cancelable it is (usually) pragmatically implicated).

In reply, a proponent of the Pragmatic Explanation View, following Adams and Fuller, may try to argue that the original descriptive content claimed to be pragmatically implicated by an utterance of 'P' is not the content of 'Q'. She may manage to find anther sentence 'R' in such a way that when 'P' occurs in 'P but not R', in the context in question, the intuition of meaningfulness of 'P' no longer persists. Then, this may be taken as suggesting that the intuition of meaningfulness of 'P' is due to some confusion between the content of 'P' and 'R'. In other words, 'R', when used instead of 'Q', satisfies the second claim of the Pragmatic Explanation View, (ii). More importantly, it seems that the proponent of the Pragmatic Explanation View can *always* find some descriptive content satisfying condition (ii): if one description does not do the job, another description can do. Therefore, it appears that the proponent of the pragmatic Explanation View can always block any argument along the lines of Green's argument somehow.

From the above discussion, however, I do not conclude that there is no successful argument based on the cancelability of conversational implicatures against the Pragmatic Explanation View. The sketch of such an argument goes like this. Let us assume that there is some descriptive content, the content of 'R', such that it satisfies condition (ii) above. Therefore, the intuition of meaningfulness of 'P' disappears when 'P' occurs in 'P but not R' in appropriate contexts. Then the question is whether such descriptive content satisfies the condition (i) above as well; put differently, does this descriptive content have the specific properties of pragmatic implicatures? My third reason against the Pragmatic Explanation View is intended to show that this is not usually the case. In fact, in the case of fictional names like 'Sherlock Holmes', such a descriptive content seems neither cancelable nor calculable. Therefore, such a descriptive content is not pragmatically implicated. I come back to this argument at §4.3.

3.3.7. Argument from commitment to conventional implicatures

Green (2007; 440-3) argues that the descriptive content claimed to be pragmatically implicated by an utterance of a sentence containing an empty name is not a *conventional* implicature. The argument goes like this. Let us call a sentence like 'She is Italian but intelligent, which is not for a moment to suggest a conflict or tension between being Italian and being intelligent' 'bizarre-in-virtue-of- meaning'. Conventional implicatures cannot be cancelled without saying something bizarre-in-virtue-of-meaning. None of the lores associated with empty names according to Adams and Dietrich's view makes a descriptive content with the above property. In other words, all such descriptive contents can be cancelled without saying something bizarre-in-virtue-of-meaning. For example, in the context introduced for sentence (8) in which Le Verrier comes to believe that Vulcan has left its orbit and then utters (8), 'Vulcan exists but there is no planet between Mercury and the Sun', the alleged descriptive content made out of the description 'the planet between Mercury and the Sun' *can* be cancelled from the content of the sentence 'Vulcan exists' without saying something bizarre-in-virtue-of-meaning. The same story goes with the other examples. Therefore, such descriptive contents cannot be conventional implicatures.

As a possible objection to his argument, then, Green suggests being called 'N' as the minimal descriptive content associated with the empty name 'N'. He, then, proposes the following rule governing the conventional implicatures of the utterances of sentences containing 'N' (441):

> Utterance of 'α is ϕ' in a speech act expresses a singular proposition if 'α' has a referent, a 'gappy' proposition otherwise; it also conventionally implicates that there is exactly one object named 'α'.

It should be noted that the above rule does not block the descriptive content in question from being a conventional implicature of an utterance of a sentence containing 'N' since 'N is F but there is nothing being called 'N'' appears to be bizarre-in-virtue-of-meaning. Green then offers the following argument to reject the above proposal. Competent and rational speakers are *committed* to the conventional implicatures of their utterances. For instance, when one asserts that 'She is poor but honest' though the speaker does not semantically express that there is a contrast between poverty and honesty, the speaker is committed to such a contrast. Furthermore, competent and rational speakers are expected to recognize their commitment to the conventional implicatures of their utterances by little reflection. Suppose that there is no object called 'Vulcan' and one who does not believe in Vulcan wants to correct Le Verrier by uttering:

(13) Vulcan does not exist. In fact, nothing by the name of 'Vulcan' exists.

Given the above assumptions, then, the speaker is committed to the proposition that there is at least one object named 'Vulcan' (since this is the conventional implicature of her utterance of (13)). Furthermore, since the speaker is competent and rational, she is expected to recognize her commitment by little reflection. But then she is expected to see that by her very utterance of (13), she has committed herself to something incompatible with the content of her utterance. This contradicts our intuition. Therefore, even being called 'N' does not account for the conventional implicature pragmatically implicated by an utterance of a sentence containing the empty name 'N'.

Adams and Fuller do not reply to the first argument. In fact, they point out that they "tend to favor an account involving conversational mechanisms" (2007, 460). If so, then it should be obvious why they don't try to reject Green's argument; Green argues that the alleged pragmatic implicatures are not conventional implicatures, Adams and Fuller share this conclusion. Nevertheless, they mention that Green's second argument, for the claim that even being called 'N' does not account for the conventional implicature of an utterance of a sentence containing ‘N’, fails. Here is their reply (459):

> We do not have to look far, however, to see where Green has gone wrong. The conventional rue that he suggests is quite implausible. Rather, the appropriate rule should be as follows. An utterance of ‘N is F’ in a speech act implicates the proposition expressed by a sentence in which the description ‘the unique object named ‘N’’ is substituted for ‘N’. On this rule we get the conventional implication of (9) [, Vulcan does not exist,] that there is no unique object named ‘Vulcan’.

To my eye, Adams and Fuller’s reply seems correct. When one utters:

(9) Vulcan does not exist.

if ‘Vulcan’ is associated with the description ‘the unique object named ‘Vulcan’’, what her utterance pragmatically implicates is the content of:

(9`) The unique object named ‘Vulcan’ does not exist.

not the content of ‘there is a unique object named ‘Vulcan’’. Therefore, Green’s counterintuitive result does not follow; the conventional implicature of (9) does not make the speaker committed to anything incompatible with the content of (9).

Let me end this section by a quick review of the result of my assessment of the above arguments against the Pragmatic Explanation View. Some of these arguments (like arguments 5 and 6) can convincingly be replied since they rely on some dubious intuitions (like the intuition of meaningfulness of a sentence containing an empty name when the name in question is associated with no descriptive content whatsoever) or some implausible assumptions (like the rule governing the conventional implicature of a sentence containing an empty name proposed by Green). The replies provided by the proponents of the Pragmatic Explanation View to some other arguments (like arguments 3 and 4) do not seem to be completely successful; in particular, the replies to both of these arguments threaten the systematicity of the view. These replies, for example, presuppose that the intuition of competent and rational speakers concerning the content of a sentence is sometimes explained by means of the semantic content of the sentence (in the case of referring names) and sometimes by means of the pragmatic implicature of an utterance of the sentence (in the case of empty names). Also, these replies presuppose that the intuition of competent and rational speakers concerning the truth value of a sentence is sometimes explained by means of speakers' knowledge of co-referentiality or non-co-referentiality of the names used in the sentence (recall the sentence 'Santa is John Perry') and sometimes by means of the truth value of the pragmatic implicature of an utterance of the sentence. Replying another argument (argument 1) seems to require some modifications to the Pragmatic Explanation View (like expanding the definition of pragmatic implication in a way that an implicature can be generated even via the intervention of an incomplete content). And finally, some version of argument 2 seems to pose an unanswered difficulty for the view. Nevertheless, I do not heavily rely on the previous arguments against the Pragmatic Explanation View; the view, as I will argue in the following section, has more serious problems.

§3.4. New Arguments against the Pragmatic Explanation View

In this section, I present three arguments, which to my view are more successful than the previous arguments in the literature, against the Pragmatic Explanation View as a defense of Neo-Russellianism (though, my second argument is not new). In a nutshell, they go like this. First, the Pragmatic Explanation View does not answer important problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism in general. Second, the Pragmatic Explanation View turns some unproblematic cases of referring names for Neo-Russellianism into problematic cases. And third, the propositions claimed to be pragmatically implicated by utterances of atomic simple sentences containing empty names do no exhibit some general characteristics of pragmatic implicatures. The first and second arguments indicate that not only does the Pragmatic Explanation View not answer the previous problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism, it also generates some new problems. In other words, the Pragmatic Explanation View increases a number of issues without successfully answering the previous ones. The third argument suggests that the Pragmatic Explanation View misidentifies some propositions as pragmatic implicatures of some utterances.

Therefore, from these three arguments, I conclude that the Pragmatic Explanation View, as a defense of Neo-Russellianism, should be resisted. In what follows, I try to explain each of the above arguments separately.

3.4.1. Argument I: The Pragmatic Explanation View does not answer important problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism in general

To justify this argument, I discuss two important problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism that are not properly answered by the Pragmatic Explanation View in general. Here are these problems.

Problem 1. The Apparent *Completeness* of the Content of a Sentence Containing an Empty Name.

One alleged advantage of the Pragmatic Explanation View is that it can account for the intuition of the competent and rational speakers concerning the completeness of the content of sentences like 'Pegasus flies' – given that 'Pegasus' is a genuinely empty name. A competent and rational speaker may mistakenly consider the descriptive proposition pragmatically implicated by an utterance of the sentence 'Pegasus flies' as the semantic content of this sentence. Since the descriptive proposition pragmatically implicated by the utterance of that sentence has a complete content, the competent and rational speaker may come to think that the sentence itself has a complete content – when it does not (it semantically expresses a gappy proposition which is not a complete content).

Though the above reply may seem promising at first glance, it does not work in general. Consider the name 'Watson' as used in the Conan Doyle's stories. It seems plausible to assume that a competent and rational speaker, say Jean, associates the following description with the name 'Watson': 'the loyal companion of Sherlock Holmes', or some description like this containing the name 'Sherlock Holmes'. Furthermore, assume that Jean is informed that the Sherlock Holmes stories are fiction and their characters do not actually exist; so, Jean is informed that neither Sherlock Holmes nor Watson exists (in other words, Jean is well informed about the subject matter). Jean believes what she has been told and assertively utters:[9]

(14) Watson is nonexistent.

Here is the problem for the Pragmatic Explanation View. On the one hand, Jean, as a competent and rational speaker, has the intuition that (14) is completely meaningful and hence has a complete content. Moreover, many competent and rational speakers, besides Jean, share this intuition. On the other hand, neither the proposition semantically expressed by (14) nor the proposition pragmatically implicated by Jean's utterance, according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, has a complete content; both of these propositions are gappy propositions. The proposition semantically expressed by (14) can be represented by:

(14p) <___, Nonexistence>

And the proposition pragmatically implicated by Jean's utterance of (14), given that Jean associates the description 'the loyal companion of Sherlock Holmes' with the name 'Watson', is the proposition semantically expressed by:

(14') The loyal companion of Sherlock Holmes is nonexistent.

The proposition expressed by (14'), analyzing the definite description along the lines of Russell's theory of definite descriptions, would be a gappy proposition since (14') contains the empty name 'Sherlock Holmes'. Therefore, in either case, we do not end up with a complete content. Hence the Pragmatic Explanation View's reply to Problem 1 does not work in this case. Similar cases can easily be made. Therefore, the Pragmatic Explanation View does not answer Problem 1 in general.

Objections and Replies

Objection 1

On behalf of the Pragmatic Explanation View, one may reply as follows. An utterance of (14) pragmatically implies a complete proposition. 'Watson', as used in (14), is associated with the description 'the loyal companion of Sherlock Holmes'. The name 'Sherlock Holmes', in turn, is associated with a description that does not contain any genuinely empty name, e.g. 'the main character of the most famous novel of Conan Doyle's'. Therefore, ultimately, the proposition pragmatically implicated by the utterance of (14) can be expressed by:

(14″) The loyal companion of the main character of the most famous novel of Conan Doyle's is nonexistent.

The proposition semantically expressed by (14″) is not gappy. Since this final proposition has a complete descriptive content, competent and rational speakers, including Jean, may come to think that (14) has a complete content – when it does not.

Reply 1

The problem with the above defense of the Pragmatic Explanation View is that (14′) has not actually been uttered to pragmatically implicate another proposition containing a definite description for 'Sherlock Holmes'. The only sentence that has actually been uttered, by Jean, is (14). Therefore, it is not obvious how (14′) may pragmatically implicate the proposition semantically expressed by (14″) when (14′) has not been uttered in the first place. Moreover, it seems easy to present other examples in which even this second resultant proposition contains a genuinely empty name. For instance, consider Mary Morstan, Watson's wife in the Sherlock Holmes stories. Assume that Jean has read the novels and associates the description 'Watson's wife' with the name 'Mary Morstan'. Everything else being equal, Jean's utterance of:

(15) Mary Morstan is nonexistent.

and both of the following:

(15′) Watson's wife is nonexistent.

(15″) The wife of the loyal companion of Sherlock Holmes is nonexistent.

express gappy propositions. Hence, it seems that the above defense of the Pragmatic Explanation View not only requires that the first *un*uttered sentence pragmatically implied by an utterance implicates another proposition but also the second, and in general a series of such *un*uttered sentences, should do the same. It does not seem that this requirement is compatible with the standard account of the pragmatic implications.

It might be said that (14′) does not have to be uttered in order to generate the semantic content of (14″) as an implicature of an utterance of (14); it depends on what the speaker assumes that the hearer knows about the Doyle's stories and what the speaker intends and expects the hearer is likely to infer from her utterance of (14) given this background knowledge. Therefore, though (14`) has not have been uttered, the semantic content of (14``) might still pragmatically be implicated by an utterance of (14).[10] This defense of the Pragmatic Explanation View, however, misses the main problem discussed above. The main problem is that the intuition of competent and rational speakers concerning the completeness of semantic content of atomic sentences containing genuinely empty names cannot in general be explained by the semantic content of some sentences pragmatically implicated by utterances of those sentences since in many cases such sentences themselves contain other genuinely empty names. If the Pragmatic Explanation View were correct then a hearer who does not know of any definite description *only containing referring names* to substitute with an empty name should either have mixed intuitions concerning the completeness of the content of an utterance of a sentence containing that empty name or totally lack the intuition of the completeness of the content. None of the latter disjuncts seems to be true; competent and rational speakers may not know of descriptions only containing referring names associated with 'Santa Claus' or 'Sherlock Holmes', given some genuinely empty uses of such names are in question, and may simultaneously find sentences containing such names completely meaningful. Therefore, the above defense does not solve the main problem with the Pragmatic Explanation View.

Problem 2. The Apparent *Truth* of a Sentence Containing an Empty Name

One advantage of the Pragmatic Explanation View is that it can explain the *intuition* of competent and rational speakers concerning the truth of an utterance of:

(4) Santa Claus is nonexistent.

The explanation goes like this. An utterance of (4) by a competent and rational speaker who associates the description 'the jolly fat man who lives at the North Pole and brings presents to the world's children on Christmas day' with the name 'Santa Claus' pragmatically implicates the proposition expressed by;

(4') The jolly fat man who lives at the North Pole and brings presents to the world's children on Christmas day is nonexistent.

Analyzing the definite description along the lines of Russell's theory of definite descriptions, (4') is true, i.e. there is no such a man, or assume so. Many competent and rational speakers, including the speaker, may mistake the content of (4') as the content of (4). Therefore, such speakers may come to think that (4) expresses a truth – when it does not, (4) only expresses a gappy proposition that is neither true nor false according to the Pragmatic Explanation View. Such an explanation can be extended to similar cases, or so has been claimed.

Here are two examples suggesting that the Pragmatic Explanation View does not answer Problem 2 in general.

Example 1. Consider the case of Jean above, discussed in Problem 1. Jean's utterance of:

(14) Watson is nonexistent.

pragmatically implicates the proposition semantically expressed by:

(14') The loyal companion of Sherlock Holmes is nonexistent.

In this case (14') is as un-true as (14) according to the Pragmatic Explanation View; both express atomic gappy propositions and hence are neither true nor false. In other words, neither the proposition semantically expressed by (14) nor the proposition pragmatically implied by Jean's utterance of (14), i.e. the content of (14'), according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, is true. Hence, the Pragmatic Explanation View's reply to Problem 2 does not work in this case. Similar cases can easily be made. Therefore, the Pragmatic Explanation View does not answer Problem 2 in general.

Example 2. Consider a competent and rational speaker, say Joe, who is not very well-informed, as many people are not, of the exact mythical description of Santa Claus. Joe, let us assume, associates a lore with the name 'Santa Claus' containing the following three descriptions: 'the man who comes from the North Pole', 'the fat man who brings presents to *some* children on Christmas day', 'the man with the read suit and white beard'. Moreover, assume that Joe is informed that Santa Claus is nonexistent and intends to utter this truth and convey it to his hearer by uttering:

(4) Santa Claus is nonexistent.

In addition, assume that unbeknownst to Joe, this year one fat man who works at a satellite station at the North Pole decides to visit some of his relatives on Christmas day. Assume that by sheer accident he satisfies all three descriptions Joe associates with the name 'Santa Claus'. Therefore all descriptive propositions that can pragmatically be implicated by Joe's utterance of (4) are *false*, i.e. there is a man who satisfies all the associated descriptions (analyzing the definite descriptions along the lines of Russell's theory of definite descriptions). Recall that according to Adams and Dietrich the semantic content of (4) is a gappy proposition and hence is neither true nor false. So there is no *true* proposition semantically expressed by (4) or pragmatically implicated by Joe's utterance of (4) to account for Joe's intuition of the truth of (4). Therefore, the Pragmatic Explanation View's reply to Problem 2 does not work in this case. Similar cases can easily be made. Therefore, the Pragmatic Explanation View does not answer Problem 2 in general.

Given that Neo-Russellianism is correct, the above example may be taken differently. It may only suggest that the intuition of competent and rational speakers concerning the truth of an utterance does not need to be explained in terms of a *true* proposition semantically expressed by the sentence in question or pragmatically implicated by the utterance of that sentence. But this conclusion also obviously clashes with the methodology of the Pragmatic Explanation View. According to the Pragmatic Explanation View, the intuition in question should be explained, at least in most cases, in terms of speakers' confusion between what is semantically expressed by the sentence and what is pragmatically implicated by the utterance of that sentence.

Objections and Replies

Objection 1

In defense of the Pragmatic Explanation View, one may argue as follows. Consider example 2. Joe's intuition concerning the content of (4) is not due to what is pragmatically implicated by his utterance; rather, it is due to his *belief* concerning what is pragmatically implicated by his utterance. Though neither the semantic content of (4) nor what is pragmatically implicated by Joe's utterance of (4) is true, Joe has the intuition that (4) is true because he *believes* what is pragmatically implicated with his utterance of (4) is true. So is in general. A competent and rational speaker's intuition about the content and truth of her utterance is determined by her *belief* about what is pragmatically implicated with her utterance.

Reply 1

The above defense of the Pragmatic Explanation View does not seem promising for several reasons. I mention three: first, it is based on an unjustified assumption, second, it is methodologically defective, and third it begs the question. Here are these reasons in more detail.

First, the above defense presupposes that a competent and rational speaker's intuition of the content is determined by her belief concerning what is pragmatically implicated with her utterance rather than by her belief concerning the semantic content of the sentence uttered. This claim, however, has not been supported by proper evidence. Quite to the contrary, it seems that in many contexts, a competent and rational speaker's intuition of the content is determined by her belief concerning what is semantically (or literally) expressed by a sentence. From this I conclude that the above defense is based on an unjustified assumption.

Second, let us assume that the objection is successful. Then in a case like (4), though neither the semantic content of the sentence uttered nor the content of what is pragmatically implicated is true, the intuition about the truth of what is said is explained by the *speaker's belief* about what is pragmatically implicated. The question immediately arises is this: If the semantic content is *neither true nor false* and what is pragmatically implicated is *false* why is it that the speaker's belief about something false explains his intuition about the truth of what is said? Quite to the contrary, it seems more likely that the speaker's belief about the semantic content which is neither true nor false explains his intuition about the truth of what is said. From a methodological point of view, if there is an intuition about truth and this intuition is to be explained in terms of the speaker's belief about something else, it is more likely for this *something else* to be neither true nor false, rather than plainly false. Or at least, if believing something plainly false can explain a speaker's intuition about the truth of what is said, it is not obvious why believing something neither true nor false cannot explain the same intuition? From this I conclude that the above defense is methodologically defective.

Third, the above defense begs the question. The original question was to explain how a competent and rational speaker has the intuition that an (atomic simple) sentence containing a genuinely empty name says something true when, according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, it is neither true nor false. This reply answers the question by saying that the competent and rational speaker *believes* so because she believes that another false proposition is true, i.e. what is pragmatically implicated with her utterance. But the main question is to explain why the competent and rational speaker believes that something which is *not true* is true. Saying that she believes that something which is *not true* is true because she believes that something else which is plainly *false* is true does not answer the main question. Form this I conclude that the above defense begs the question.

3.4.2. Argument II: The Pragmatic Explanation View turns some unproblematic cases of referring names for Neo-Russellianism into problematic cases[11]

To justify this argument, I discuss two important cases which can straightforwardly be explained by Neo-Russellianism when the Pragmatic Explanation View turns them into new problems. Here are these cases.

Problem 3. The Apparent *Completeness* of the Content of a Sentence Containing a Full Name.

Neo-Russellianism does not have any problem explaining the intuition of competent and rational speakers concerning the completeness of the content of a sentence containing a full name (referring name).[12] For example, consider an utterance of

(16) Conan Doyle exists.

at the time of Conan Doyle. Competent and rational speakers have the intuition that (16), on an occasion of use, has a complete content, since (16) semantically expresses a singular Russellian proposition, not a gappy proposition, which can be represented by:

(16p) <Conan Doyle, Existence>

So, that the competent and rational speakers have the intuition that (16), on an occasion of use, has a complete content not only is correctly predicted by Neo-Russellianism but also is properly explained in terms of the singular Russellian proposition semantically expressed by (16), i.e. (16p).

The Pragmatic Explanation View, however, turns this case to be a new problem for Neo-Russellianism. The argument goes like this. As the Pragmatic Explanation View claims, all names, gappy or full, are associated with some descriptions, lores. Assume a competent and rational speaker who associates the description 'the author of the Sherlock Holmes stories' with the name 'Conan Doyle' – as many speakers may do. Call this speaker 'Jack'. Jack's utterance of (16), according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, pragmatically implies the proposition expressed by:

(16`) The author of the Sherlock Holmes stories exists.

But (16`) lacks a complete content according to Neo-Russellianism, and hence according to the Pragmatic Explanation View as a defense of it; (16`) expresses a gappy proposition. Moreover, the Pragmatic Explanation View describes competent and rational speakers as widely and systematically confused about what is semantically expressed by a sentence they utter and what is pragmatically implicated by their utterance. If so, then Jack, at least from time to time, should mistake what is semantically expressed by (16) with what is pragmatically implicated by his utterance of (16). But if Jack mistakes the content of (16) with the content of (16`), then he should not have the intuition that (16) has a complete content – since (16`) does not have a complete content according to the Pragmatic Explanation View. This, however, is not the case; Jack has the intuition that (16) has a complete content in all various sorts of contexts, as most of us do. Similar examples can easily be made. Therefore, the Pragmatic Explanation View turns an unproblematic case for Neo-Russellianism, i.e. the explanation of the intuition of completeness of the content of sentences like (16), into a problematic case, when the associated descriptions with the names in question contain genuinely empty names.

Objections and Replies

Objection 1

On behalf of the Pragmatic Explanation View, one may argue as follows. It is not the case that a competent and rational speaker only has the proposition pragmatically implicated by her utterance available at the intuitive level. She has both what is semantically expressed by the sentence and what is pragmatically implicated by her utterance available at the intuitive level. Her intuition about the content of the sentence, however, is determined by both the semantic content of the sentence and the proposition pragmatically implicated by the utterance of the sentence. Therefore, in many cases, including the case of Jack above, a competent and rational speaker may not mistake the semantic content of a sentence with what is pragmatically implicated by her utterance.

Reply 1

The above defense does not seem promising for two reasons. First, it is methodologically defective; though it claims that a competent and rational speaker has access to both the semantic content of a sentence and what is pragmatically implicated by her utterance, it does not systematically explain how her intuition concerning the content of the sentence is built up. From a methodological point of view, no systematic way has been proposed according to which one can explain when the speaker's intuition of the content is determined by the semantic content of the sentence and when by what is pragmatically implicated by the speaker's utterance. Second, the above defense does not reply to the problem completely. Assume that the above reply is correct. In other words, assume that a competent and rational speaker has access to both what is semantically expressed by a sentence and what is pragmatically implicated by her utterance of that sentence. This suggests that, if the Pragmatic Explanation View is correct, a competent and rational speaker like Jack should have *mixed* intuitions about the content of (16): since he has access to the semantic content of (16), he should have the intuition that (16) has a complete content, since he has access to what is pragmatically implicated by his utterance of (16), he should have the intuition that (16) does not have a complete content. But it is not the case. Jack does not seem to have mixed intuitions. Jack, as many other people who may associate the same kind of descriptions containing genuinely empty names with full names, does not show any indication of mixed intuitions concerning the completeness of the content of (16), and similar sentences.

Objection 2

One may defend the Pragmatic Explanation View as follows. There is a systematic way of explaining when the intuition of a competent and rational speaker concerning the content of a sentence, on an occasion of use, is determined by the semantic content of the sentence and when by what is pragmatically implicated by her utterance. For all (atomic simple) sentences containing full names, the former, i.e. the semantic content, determines the intuition; for all (atomic simple) sentences containing (genuinely) empty names, the latter, i.e. what is pragmatically implicated, determines the intuition. Therefore, there is neither the problem of lack of a systematic explanation nor the problem of mixed intuitions.

Reply 2

The above defense does not seem promising either. It has two problems. First, it makes an unjustified assumption about the mechanisms generating our intuitions concerning the content of sentences containing full names versus sentences containing (genuinely) empty names, and second, it still does not suffice to answer the problem completely. I explain.

First, that the mechanisms generating our intuitions concerning the content of sentences radically differ when they contain full names rather than (genuinely) empty names seems unjustified. No independent evidence has been provided supporting this claim by the proponents of the Pragmatic Explanation View. Quite to the contrary, there is evidence undermining this claim. For example, in many ordinary and scientific contexts, competent and rational speakers do not know whether the names used in the sentences are full or empty. Nevertheless, they share the same kind of intuition with regard to the completeness of the content of such sentences. If competent and rational speaker's knowledge of the fullness or emptiness of names does not affect their intuitions concerning the completeness of the content of the sentences containing those names, it is likely that the very fullness or emptiness of the names does not change the mechanisms generating such intuitions as well. As another potential argument against the above defense, it might be noted that there is no syntactic or grammatical difference between full names and empty names. Therefore, it might be concluded that, our intuition concerning the content of sentences containing full names or empty names is indifferent to the fullness or emptiness of the names. This may suggest that the mechanisms generating our intuitions of the content of sentences are also indifferent to the fullness or emptiness of the names. To conclude, not only have the proponents of the Pragmatic Explanation View not provided evidence supporting the above claim but also there are evidence and potential arguments against it. Hence, I conclude that, the above defense is based on some unjustified assumption concerning the mechanisms generating our intuitions of the content.

Second, the above defense does not answer the problem completely. Consider an utterance of:

(17) Agatha Christie admired Sherlock Holmes.

by a competent and rational speaker who associates the description 'the author of the Miss Marple stories' with 'Agatha Christie' and the description 'the most famous fictional detective ever' with 'Sherlock Homes'. Therefore, the utterance of (17) pragmatically implicates the proposition expressed by:

(17') The author of the Miss Marple stories admired the most famous fictional detective ever.

On the one hand, since (17) contains a full name, 'Agatha Christie', following the above defense, our intuitions concerning the content of the sentence should be determined by the semantic content of the sentence. But the semantic content of (17), according to Neo-Russellianism, and hence the Pragmatic Explanation View as a defense of it, is a gappy proposition. Therefore, we should have the intuition that (17) has an incomplete content. But we don't. On the other hand, since (17) contains an empty name, 'Sherlock Holmes', again following the above defense, our intuitions concerning the content of the sentence should be determined by what is pragmatically implicated by the sentence. But what is pragmatically implicated by the above utterance of (17), the content of (17'), is a gappy proposition as well – this time the description substituted for 'Agatha Christi' contains a genuinely empty name, 'Mrs.

Marple'.[13] Therefore, again we should have the intuition that (17) has an incomplete content. But we don't. So, the problem has not still been answered. Other examples containing *both* full and empty names, similar to the above, can easily be made. Hence, the above defense does not seem promising in general.

Problem 4. The Apparent Truth of a Sentence Containing a Full Name[14]

Neo-Russellianism does not have any problem explaining the intuition of competent and rational speakers concerning the truth of an utterance containing a full name. The Pragmatic Explanation View, however, turns this case to be a new problem for Neo-Russellianism. Here are two examples.

Example 3. Consider an utterance of (16) at the time of Conan Doyle again.

(16) Conan Doyle exists.

Competent and rational speakers have the intuition that (16), on an occasion of use, is true. Neo-Russellianism does not have any problem explaining the intuition of the truth of (16) since (16) semantically expresses (16p):

(16p) <Conan Doyle, Existence>

And (16p) is in fact true. The Pragmatic Explanation View, however, turns this case into a problem. The argument goes like this. According to the Pragmatic Explanation View, all names, gappy or full, are associated with some descriptions, lores. Consider the case of Jack who associates the description 'the author of the Sherlock Holmes stories' with the name 'Conan Doyle' discussed above. Jack's utterance of (16) pragmatically implicates what is expressed by:

(16`) The author of the Sherlock Holmes stories exists.

If the Pragmatic Explanation View were correct, then competent and rational speakers would widely and systematically be confused about what is semantically expressed by a sentence they utter and what is pragmatically implicated by their utterance of that sentence. If so, then Jack also should either mistake the truth of (16) with the neither truth nor falsehood of (16`) – in the case that he completely mistakes what is semantically expressed by (16) with what is pragmatically implicated with his utterance of (16) – or at least he should have some mixed intuitions about the truth of (16) – when he does not *completely* mistake them. However, this is not the case. Jack, as many other competent and rational speakers, associates a description containing a (genuinely) empty name with 'Conan Doyle' and neither has the intuition that (16) is neither true nor false nor a mixed intuition about the truth of (16) in the above circumstances.

Example 4. Consider a competent and rational speaker, say Bob, who is not very well-informed, as many people are not, of the exact description of Christopher Columbus. Bob, let us assume, associates the description 'the first European to land in America' with the name 'Christopher Columbus'. Moreover, assume that Bob is informed that Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492 and intends to utter this truth and convey it to his hearer by uttering:

(18) Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492.

Bob's utterance of (18), according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, pragmatically implicates the proposition expressed by:

(18`) The first European to land in America discovered America in 1492.

(18`) is false, or assume so, given that the *first* European landed in America was a Norse sailor.

By the same argument as above, if the Pragmatic Explanation View were correct, then Bob should either mistake the truth of (18) with the falsehood of (18`) – in the case that he completely mistakes what is semantically expressed by (18) with what is pragmatically implicated with his utterance of (18) – or at least he should have some mixed intuitions about the truth of (18) – when he does not *completely* mistake them. However, this is not the case. Bob, as many other competent and rational speakers, associates a description which is not true of Christopher Columbus with 'Christopher Columbus' and neither has the intuition that (18) is false nor a mixed intuition about the truth of (18) in the above circumstances.

The same kind of objections and replies might be offered as the ones discussed in Problem 2 and Problem 3. Avoiding repetition, however, I do not go through them.[15]

3.4.3. Argument III: The propositions claimed to be pragmatically implicated by utterances of atomic simple sentences containing empty names do no exhibit some general characteristics of pragmatic implicatures.

To justify this argument, I assume that a proponent of the Pragmatic Explanation View should appeal to conversational implicatures rather than conventional implicatures (I justify this assumption beneath). Then, I discuss two important characteristics of conversational implicatures, i.e. cancelability and calculability, and show that the propositions claimed to be conversationally implicated by utterances of atomic simple sentences containing empty names do not have these characteristics.

Here is the justification of the assumption that a plausible version of the Pragmatic Explanation View should appeal to conversational, rather than conventional, implicatures. Firstly, Adams and Fuller (2007, 460) explicitly say that "we tend to favor an account involving *conversational* mechanisms" (my emphasis). One can find similar remarks in their earlier works as well. Secondly, as they have argued, "there are number of reasons to reject the account in terns of *conventional* implicature. First, it cannot account for the fact that the role of associated descriptions may differ from group to group. Second, the description 'object referred to by "N"', which might seem to have the universality needed for a conventional association, is properly *not* part of the descriptive lore of young children. Little four-year old Carolyn understands 'Kate' (her sister), 'Barbie' (her doll), and 'Santa Claus', although she does not have the concept of a name and of reference" (ibid.), emphasis is mine. And thirdly, add to the above reasons the debate over conventional implicatures as some kind of implicatures; for example, Bach (2005) argues that the view that conventional implicatures are implicatures is one of the top ten misconceptions about implicatures. From these considerations, I conclude that a tenable version of the Pragmatic Explanation View should appeal to conversational implicatures, rather than conventional implicatures. The rest of the argument, then, is to show that propositions claimed to be conversational implicatures of the speakers' utterances of sentences containing empty names do not have two significant characteristics of conversational implicatures, i.e. cancelability and calculability. Therefore, they cannot be conversational implicatures.

Characteristic 1. Conversational implicatures are cancelable.

Conversational implicatures are generally cancelable. Grice distinguishes between two forms of cancelability as follows:

> […] a putative conversational implicature that *p* is explicitly cancelable if, to the form of words the utterance of which putatively implicates that *p*, it is admissible to add but not *p*, or *I do not mean to imply that p*, and it is contextually cancelable if one can find situations in which the utterance of the form of words would simply not carry the implicature.
>
> (Grice; 1967b/1989, 44)

Bear in mind that we are not talking about the so called 'conventional' implicatures, both generalized conversational implicatures and particularized conversational implicatures satisfy the above condition. As an example of the former, consider:

(20) Some Athletes smoke

and

(21) Not all athletes smoke.

A competent and rational speaker can consistently assert (20) while denying (21); in other words, when asserting (20), she can deny (21) without saying something bizarre-in-virtue-of- meaning (see §3.8.). The same story goes with particularized conversational implicatures. Consider, in an appropriate context, for example:

(22) I have to work

and

(23) I won't come to the party.

A competent and rational speaker may assert (22) and deny (23) without saying something bizarre-in-virtue-of- meaning.

Now the Pragmatic Explanation View claims that an utterance of (24),

(24) Sherlock Holmes is nonexistent.

by a competent and rational speaker who associates the description 'the most famous fictional detective ever' with 'Sherlock Homes' pragmatically implicates what is expressed by:

(24') The most famous fictional detective ever is nonexistent.

However, it does not seem that the speaker can assert (24) and deny (24') without saying something bizarre-in-virtue-of- meaning. In other words, the following seems bizarre-in-virtue-of- meaning:

(25) Sherlock Holmes is nonexistent but the most famous fictional detective ever is *not* nonexistent.

Assuming that 'is not nonexistent' says the same thing as 'is existent', (25) says the same thing as:

(26) Sherlock Holmes is nonexistent but the most famous fictional detective ever is existent.

It seems obvious that (26) is not admissible. But if so, then (24') is not cancelable from (24). Therefore, (24') does not have a general characteristic of pragmatic implicatures. Similar examples can easily be made. Therefore, at least some propositions claimed to be pragmatic implicatures of atomic simple sentences containing empty names do not satisfy a general characteristic of pragmatic implicatures; they are not cancelable.[16]

Characteristic 2. Conversational implicatures are calculable

Conversational implicatures are calculable in the sense that they "must be capable of being worked out".[17] Grice explains this as follows:

> To work out that a particular conversational implicature is present, the hearer will rely on the following data: (1) the conventional meaning of the words used, together with the identity of any references that may be involved; (2) the Cooperative Principle and its maxims; (3) the context, linguistic or otherwise, of the utterance; (4) other items of background knowledge; and (5) the fact (or supposed fact) that all relevant items falling under the previous headings are available to both participants and both participants know or assume this to be the case.

(Grice; 1967a/1989, 31)

Both generalized conversational implicatures and particularized conversational implicatures satisfy the above five conditions.

Now, let's consider a competent and rational speaker who associates the description 'the most famous fictional detective ever' with 'Sherlock Homes'. According to the Pragmatic Explanation View, the speaker's utterance of

(24) Sherlock Holmes is nonexistent.

pragmatically implicates the proposition expressed by:

(24') The most famous fictional detective ever is nonexistent.

For the proposition expressed by (24') to be pragmatically implicated by the utterance of (24), it should be calculable. Therefore, it should satisfy the above five conditions. This, however, does not seem to be the case. In particular, conditions one and five are unlikely to be satisfied.

Consider the first condition. To work out that the content of (24') is present, the hearer should rely on the "conventional meaning of the words used". Given that by 'conventional meaning' Grice, and hence the Pragmatic Explanation View, mean semantic content, since (24') lacks a complete semantic content, according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, it is not obvious how this condition can be satisfied. It might be said that the hearer relies on the gappy proposition semantically expressed by (24). This, however, seems odd. First, the gappy proposition expressed by (24) is an *incomplete* content; that the hearer *relies* on the incomplete content of (24) in working out the content of (24') seems unlikely. Second, and more importantly, competent and rational language users, both speakers and hearers, do not seem to have access to the alleged gappy propositions. Such propositions do not seem to be introspectively and a priori available to competent and rational language users in the sense that they may entertain and believe such propositions without recognizing that such propositions are the objects of their thoughts and beliefs. Therefore, it seems unlikely that the hearer *relies* on the gappy proposition expressed by (24) in working out the content of (24').

Consider the second condition. Again, it does not seems likely to assume that the hearer *relies* on "the Cooperative Principle and its maxims" in working out the content of (24'). This, however, is not to say that we cannot formulate some rules, in accordance with Grice's maxims, to support the Pragmatic Explanation View.[18] The point, rather, is that there is not enough evidence indicting that the hearer should be interpreted as relying on such rules.

The situation may seem better for the third and fourth conditions. Though it seems that a wide range of hearers in a wide range of contexts are able to work out (24') without relying on the context of the utterance of (24), this may only indicate that the content of (24') is more like a *generalized* conversational implicature. The same story seems to go with the fourth condition. In other words, though relying on background knowledge does not seem relevant in working out (24') in general, this may only indicate that the content of (24') is not a particularized conversational implicature.

The fifth condition, mutual knowledge or attitudes, however, is not likely to be satisfied. Assume a token of (24), 'Sherlock Holmes is nonexistent', which one may find on her classroom whiteboard. She may recover the content of (24') from this token of (24), without there being two participants, much less mutual knowledge. Therefore, condition five asserting that "all relevant items falling under the previous headings are available to *both participants and both participants know or assume this to be the case*" is not satisfied. Similar scenarios can be pictured. Therefore, in general, this condition is unlikely to be satisfied.

If so, then (24') is not *calculable* from (24) (in the sense necessary for conversational implicatures). Hence, (24') does not have a general characteristic of pragmatic implicatures, i.e. calculability. Similar examples can be made. Therefore, at least some propositions claimed to be conversational implicatures of atomic simple sentences containing empty names are not likely to satisfy a general characteristic of conversational implicatures; they are not likely to be calculable.

To conclude, according to Argument III, since at least some propositions claimed to be conversational implicatures of atomic simple sentences containing empty names are not likely to satisfy two important characteristics of conversational implicatures, i.e. cancelability and calculability, such propositions are not likely to be conversational implicatures of the utterances of the sentences in question.

3.5. Conclusion

I explained the Pragmatic Explanation View as a defense of Neo-Russellianism in §1. The strength of the view, then, was shown in §2. Thereafter, in §3, I presented and evaluated seven arguments against the view; some of them could be answered straightforwardly, some others could be answered were the view modified slightly, and some threaten the view more seriously. In §4, then, I provided three arguments against the Pragmatic Explanation View that, to my eye, are more successful than the previous arguments. I conclude that these arguments together, though may not eject the Pragmatic Explanation View altogether, at least suggest that the view should be resisted as a defense of Neo-Russellianism at this stage.

CHAPTER 4

THE PUZZLE OF EMPTY NAMES

§4.0. Introduction

This chapter acts as a summary and conclusion of the previous chapters. In §.1, I summarize chapters 1-3; in a nut shell, no version of Neo-Russellianism provides a successful defense of the view with regard to the problems raised by genuinely empty names. One may react to this conclusion in different ways. First, one may deny that the problems in question are significant. In §.2, I briefly argue for the significance of these problems. Second, one may deny the existence of genuinely empty names in natural language. In §.3, I have offered three arguments for the inevitability of genuinely empty names in natural language; in other words, there are always some names, or some uses of them, in natural language that are genuinely empty. Third, one may consider a radically modified version of Neo-Russellianism according to which genuinely empty names refer to some kind of Meinongian objects. Quite besides the arguments for the existence of genuinely empty names in §.3 and the problems with Meinongian ontologies, in §.4, I have argued that even this radical modification of Neo-Russellianism does not answer important problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism. The conclusion, §.5, is that, at least with regard to the problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism, Neo-Russellianism is deeply problematic: either Millianism or the thesis of singular Russellian propositions is false. In addition, in the technical Appendix to this chapter, §.6, I discuss the Clarck-Rapaport paradox (for Neo-Meinongian theories) which provides the ground for my third argument for the inevitability of genuinely empty names in natural language.

§4.1. A summary of the previous chapters

According to Neo-Russellianism, the semantic content of an atomic sentence containing a proper name is a singular Russellian proposition. In the case of genuinely empty names, there is no such singular Russellian proposition; nevertheless, competent and rational speakers have the same kind of semantic intuition with regard to atomic sentences containing genuinely empty names as other atomic sentences containing referring names. Neo-Russellians, in reply, appeal to gappy propositions as the semantic content of atomic sentences containing genuinely empty names. Gappy propositions, however, do not suffice to explain all problematic intuitions for Neo-Russellianism. For example, it is not obvious how gappy propositions can account for the intuition about the truth of sentences like 'Vulcan is nonexistent' or the intuition that the previous sentence says something different from what 'Zeus is nonexistent' says. In reply to the insufficiency of gappy propositions, Neo-Russellians divide into different groups. First, David Braun argues that all atomic gappy propositions are false. He, then, appeals to *propositional guises* as psychological entities under which singular Russellian propositions as well as gappy propositions are similarly entertained (it is worth mentioning that Braun's view is, at least partially, shared by Jennifer Saul (2007)). According to this view, Competent and rational speakers may think that a single proposition is true when they entertain or believe it under a specific propositional guise and may think that it is false when they entertain or believe the very same proposition under a different propositional guise. The same goes with their intuitions about the identity of content. Second, Nathan Salmon and, following him, Scott Soames appeal to *nonexistent propositions*. Such propositions may have the property of being true, expressed, or believed *now* though they do not exist *now*; in a similar way, such propositions may differ from each other now though they do not have any kind of being now. Though atomic gappy propositions are neither true nor false, according to this view, the atomic nonexistent propositions are either true or false. Nonexistent propositions are also objects of belief and other attitudes. Third, Fred Adams, Gary Fuller, Robert Stecker, Kenneth Taylor, Thomas Ryckman, and Laura Dietrich appeal to the pragmatic implicatures: utterances of sentences containing genuinely empty names pragmatically implicate the descriptive propositions that might be true or differ form each other depending on the descriptions associated with the genuinely empty names used in such sentences.

In the previous chapters I have argued that none of the above approaches provides a successful defense of Neo-Russellianism against the problems raised by genuinely empty names. Braun's theory does not follow a unified methodology (Ch. 1, §4). Part of the theory, i.e. Braun's theory of understanding sentences, pushes the overall theory toward a version of Neo-Fregeanism, rather than Neo-Russellianism. It also does not properly explain the intuitions of competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers concerning the completeness, identity (sameness or difference), informativeness, and truth of atomic sentences containing genuinely empty names (Ch. 1, §8). And finally, the theory requires gappy propositions to play all the different roles of standard propositions, including being truth bearers; as I have shown (Ch.1, §9) this latter claim encounters serious epistemic and semantic issues.

In the second chapter, I argued that Salmon's theory of empty names is not only internally problematic but also Neo-Meinongian. The former claim was justified (Ch. 2, §2.) through the commitment of Salmon's theory to nonexistent singular Russellian propositions (NSRP's) and gappy propositions (GP's); it was shown that the theory does not properly answer various open questions with regard to NSRP's and GP's. Furthermore, it has been extensively argued (Ch.2, §4) that Salmon' theory is Neo-Meinongian. Though I did not argue against Neo-Meinongianism, since most Neo-Russellians share the thesis that Neo-Meinongianism should be resisted, it can be concluded that Salmon's theory of empty names should be resisted as well or at least that it does not provide the kind of defense of Neo-Russellianism that most Neo-Russellians expect. More importantly, as I discuss beneath, even a Neo-Meinongian version of Neo-Russellianism will not suffice to answer the problems raised by genuinely empty names for Neo-Russellianism.

In the third chapter, after introducing the pragmatic implicature solution under the title of the 'Pragmatic Explanation View' (Ch3. §1), I showed the strength of the view by explaining how it may reply to some of the problems raised by genuinely empty names for Neo-Russellianism when the other Neo-Russellian approaches may not (Ch3. §2). Nevertheless, the Pragmatic Explanation View has been extensively criticized. Some of these criticisms can convincingly be answered. A careful examination of the rest, however, not only suggests some modifications to the view but also indicates that the coherency and systematicity of the view are questionable (Ch3. §3). Furthermore, it was shown that the Pragmatic Explanation View encounters more serious problems (Ch3. §3). First, the view does not answer important problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism *in general*.

Second, the Pragmatic Explanation View turns some unproblematic cases of referring names for Neo-Russellianism into problematic cases. And third, the propositions claimed to be pragmatically implicated by the utterances of atomic simple sentences containing empty names do not exhibit some of the general characteristics of pragmatic implicatures. The above considerations suggest that the Pragmatic Explanation View, as other defenses of Neo-Russellianism, should be resisted.

§4.2. The significance of the problems raised by genuinely empty names for Neo-Russellianism

Since no version of Neo-Russellianism does justice to the problems raised by genuinely empty names, therefore either Neo-Russellianism is not acceptable or the problems raised by genuinely empty names are pseudo-problems, or something along this might be said by a proponent of Neo-Russellianism. The proponent of Neo--Russellianism, then, may accept the latter claim and thereby save Neo-Russellianism.

But the problems raised by genuinely empty names, like the semantic content of atomic simple sentences containing such names, the truth value of such sentences, the intuition of competent and rational speakers concerning the content and truth value of these sentences and so forth are all completely similar to the problems raised by atomic simple sentences containing referring names. Unless one is willing to announce *all* such problems, with regard to *both* referring and empty names, as pseudo problems, it is not obvious why we should consider the former as pseudo-problems but not the latter. Therefore, if some semantic problems with regard to referring names are real problems parity of reasoning suggests that similar problems with regard to genuinely empty names are real problems as well.

Another point worth mentioning about the significance of the problems raised by genuinely empty names for Neo-Russellianism is that the formulation of most of these problems does not have anything to do with propositional attitude report sentences and their semantics. In fact, it can be shown that two theses of Neo-Russellianism are enough to generate most of the problems discussed in chapters 1-3: Millianism and the thesis of singular Russellian propositions, that the semantic content of a sentence containing a name is a singular Russellian proposition. The main problems raised by genuinely empty names for Neo-Russellianism have two bases: one, the *semantics* of atomic simple sentences containing genuinely empty names, and second, the *intuition* of competent and rational speakers about the atomic simple sentences containing genuinely empty names. Since the sentences in question are *atomic*, the semantics of logical connectives as well as the intuition of competent and rational speakers concerning these connectives do not seem to be important in the formulation of these problems. Since the sentences in question are *simple*, namely they do not include any 'that'-clauses, the semantics of propositional attitudes as well as the intuition of competent and rational speakers concerning such attitudes do not seem to be important in the formulation of these problems. Therefore, the problems we are concerned with seem to question the core of Neo-Russellianism, namely Millianism and the thesis of singular Russellian propositions.

§4.3. Arguments for the existence of genuinely empty names in natural language

Given that the problems raised by genuinely empty names are as significant as the problems raised by referring names, it seems that since no version of Neo-Russellianism does justice to these problems, therefore Neo-Russellianism is not acceptable. Following this line of reasoning, then, one may reject Neo-Russellianism altogether. However, the above reasoning has a hidden assumption which plays a crucial role and hence deserves special attention. The assumption is this: natural language *contains genuinely* empty names. In other words, the above reasoning presupposes that there *are genuinely* empty names in natural language. In fact the argument goes like this. There are genuinely empty names in natural language. The problems raised by genuinely empty names are as significant as the problems raised by referring names. Then, since no version of Neo-Russellianism does justice to the problems raised by genuinely empty names, therefore Neo-Russellianism is not acceptable. More conservatively, we should conclude that no current version of Neo-Russellianism is acceptable.

This, however, is not the only valid conclusion of the above argument. Taking the above-mentioned hidden assumption into consideration, one may conclude that either all proper names of natural language are referring names or no current version of Neo-Russellianism is acceptable. Put differently, one may end up with this disjunction: either there is no genuinely empty name in natural language or no current version of Neo-Russellianism is acceptable. A proponent of Neo-Russellianism, then, may simply adopt the first disjunct: there is no genuinely empty name in natural language. In fact, it might be claimed that, though all Neo-Russellian approaches presupposed that there are genuinely empty names and then tried to account for such names within a Neo-Russellian framework, this is a mistaken strategy. Neo-Russellian theories do much better if they reject the existence of genuinely empty names from the outset, or something like this might be claimed. None of the so called 'empty' names, following the above defense of Neo-Russellianism, is a genuinely empty name; fictional names (e.g. 'Sherlock Holmes') refer to fictional characters, mythical names (e.g. 'Zeus') refer to mythical characters, empty names originated from false scientific theories (e.g. 'Vulcan') refer to some theoretical (abstract) objects, and so on. Neo- Russellianism is not in trouble since there are no genuinely empty names in natural language. That no current Neo-Russellian view does justice to the problems raised by empty names does not show that no current version of Neo-Russellianism is acceptable; rather, it only shows that there are no genuinely empty names in natural language. So, reject the existence of genuinely empty names in natural language and embrace Neo-Russellianism, be it in one version or another.

In what follows I try to show that there are good reasons to accept the existence of genuinely empty names in natural language and hence the above-mentioned disjunction only leads us to the conclusion that no current version of Neo-Russellianism is acceptable. Here are three arguments for the thesis that there are genuinely empty names in natural language.

4.3.1. An Argument from Stipulation

One may introduce a proper name descriptively in such a way that by stipulation it does not refer to any thing. One example can be found in Salmon (1998/2005, 84):

> I hereby introduce 'Nappy' as a name for the actual present emperor of France, whoever that might be, if there is one and to refer to nothing otherwise. Take note: I

do not introduce 'Nappy' as a name for a particular fictional character that I just created. I am not storytelling and I am not pretending to use 'Nappy' as a name of a person. Nor do I subscribe to any theory to the effect that France now has an emperor. Rather I introduce 'Nappy' as a name for the actual present emperor of France, provided – contrary to my every expectation – that there presently is an emperor of France. Barring a fairly radical skepticism, we know that there is no such person as Nappy. Nappy is not a fictional character, not a mythical character, not a fabrication, not a flight of fancy. There is a very good reason why Nappy is none of these things. Not to put too fine a point on it, Nappy does not exist.

So, 'Nappy' is a genuinely empty name. By stipulating that 'Nappy' refers to the actual present emperor of France, whoever that might be, if there is one and does not refer to anything else otherwise, we have guaranteed that 'Nappy' does not refer to any thing whatsoever since there is no actual present emperor of France and otherwise, by stipulation, it is nonreferring.

It might be replied that since the antecedent of Salmon's stipulative definition, i.e. there is one actual present emperor of France, is not satisfied, therefore 'Nappy' is not and cannot be functioning as a name of or as a name for anything. Hence, 'Nappy' is not a name. So, 'Nappy' is not an empty name.[19] This objection, however, presupposes that the 'there is one actual present emperor of France' is the antecedent of the stipulative definition of 'Nappy' (and hence if the antecedent is not fulfilled, the definition fails and therefore no name is introduced). This is not the case; 'Nappy' is not introduced through a conditional stipulative definition. The name 'Nappy' has been introduced via fixing its reference in all possible circumstances. All possible circumstances, in turn, can be divided into two classes: circumstances in which there is one actual present emperor of France and circumstances in which there is no actual present emperor of France. With regard to each class of possible circumstances, the reference of 'Nappy' is fixed by stipulation. Hence the clause 'if there is one actual present emperor of France' is not part of a conditional stipulative definition of 'Nappy' and so the objection fails. 'Nappy' is a name. Furthermore, since by stipulation 'Nappy' does not refer to anything 'Nappy' is an empty name.

One may reject the argument from stipulation by saying that in this case 'Nappy' refers to a *beingless* object. Following this line of reasoning one may expand the domain of objects to cover beingless objects as well as existent and subsistent objects. Quite besides the problems with such ontology, still we may run the above argument and claim that there are genuinely empty names. It is enough to stipulate, in the very description by means of which we fix the reference of 'Nappy', that 'Nappy' refers to the actual present emperor of France, whoever that might be, if there is one and does not refer to anything else *including any beingless object* otherwise. Then, 'Nappy' is a genuinely empty name.

Similar examples can easily be made. There are many definite descriptions that do not refer to anything. We can make new definite descriptions that do not refer to any thing *whatsoever* out of such non-referring definite descriptions by adding more clauses to them and stipulating that they do not refer to anything whatsoever. Finally we can use such descriptions to introduce new names in natural language. Such names would be genuinely empty. Therefore, there are genuinely empty names in natural language.

4.3.2. An Argument from Intention

This argument, following David Braun (2005), employs the point that strictly speaking names themselves are not the things that refer or not; rather, these are *speakers' utterances* of the names that refer or not. So even if one postulate some existent, subsistent, or beingless object as the referent of a so called 'empty' name of natural language, this still does not guarantee that all utterances of that name by different speakers and in different contexts always refer to the posited object. In other words, even if some utterance of a so called 'empty' name refers to some kind of object, this does not guarantee that there is no nonreferring utterance of that name. Consider the name 'Vulcan'. Assume that we accept that Le Verrier's act of theorizing creates or lets him have access (depending on our view concerning the relationship between Le Verrier and Vulcan) to the abstract object Vulcan (the nature of this abstract object is not at stake now). This may suggest that my utterance of 'Vulcan' in a sentence like 'Le Verrier was thinking of Vulcan' (uttered by me) refers to the abstract object Vulcan. However, this does not entail that Le Verrier's utterance of 'Vulcan' in a sentence like 'I am looking for Vulcan' (uttered by Le Verrier) also refers to the abstract object Vulcan. For one thing, Le Verrier does not have the proper kind of *intention* to refer to the abstract object Vulcan (even if we accept that his act of theorizing has created or somehow revealed the abstract object Vulcan). A necessary condition for a speaker's utterance of a name to successfully refer to an object is that the speaker should properly *intend* to use the name to refer to that object. Surely Le Verrier did not intend to refer to an abstract object in his utterance of 'I am looking for Vulcan'. He did not intend to look for an abstract object, as all pieces of evidence suggest. Therefore, even if there is such an abstract object, Le Verrier's utterance of 'Vulcan' in a sentence like 'I am looking for Vulcan' (uttered by Le Verrier) does not refer to that abstract object. Similar examples can easily be made. Therefore, I conclude that, there are *utterances* of proper names in natural language that are genuinely empty.[1]

One might reject the above argument with the following reasoning. From the fact that the abstract object Vulcan is not a plausible candidate for the reference of Le Verrier's utterance of 'Vulcan' it does not follow that Le Verrier's utterance of 'Vulcan' is genuinely empty. It simply says that it has another referent. Put differently, from the premise that *a particular object* is not the referent of Le Verrier's utterance of 'Vulcan', it does not follow that *no object* is the referent of Le Verrier's utterance of 'Vulcan'. Hence the argument is fallacious.

The argument is not fallacious, however. It can easily be rephrased to escape the previous criticism; this is how the argument goes in general. Consider all objects. Divide them into concrete and non-concrete (including abstract objects). No concrete object can be the referent of Le Verrier's utterance of 'Vulcan' since no concrete object has all of the properties that Le Verrier ascribes to Vulcan. No non-concrete object can be the referent of Le Verrier's utterance of 'Vulcan' by the above argument, namely Le Verrier does not have the proper kind of intention to refer to a non-concrete object (this is because all pieces of evidence strongly suggest that he was looking for a concrete object). So, no object can be the referent of Le Verrier's utterance of 'Vulcan' whatsoever. Hence, Le Verrier's utterance of Vulcan is genuinely empty. Similar examples can be made. Therefore, there are utterances of proper names in natural language that are genuinely empty.

4.3.3. An Argument from Consistency

Let's assume that there is a semantic theory that assigns a unique semantic referent to *every* proper name of *natural language*. Given some minimal conditions, it can be proved that such a semantic theory is inconsistent.

There are different ways to develop the argument. One is to appeal to some well-known paradoxes. Consider Russell's paradox, for example. There is an extension of natural language containing the language of elementary set theory. In this language, the expression 'the set of all sets which are not members of themselves' does not refer to any object, otherwise we have a contradiction. But then the above description can be used to fix the reference of a proper name, say 'Russ'. 'Russ' is a genuinely empty name; hence there are genuinely empty names in natural language. One may object to this argument by rejecting the assumption that the extension of English with the language of elementary set theory is itself a natural language. Admittedly, this is a reasonable concern with regard to this version of the argument; however, the argument can be reconstrued in many different ways. As another example, consider Bernays-Hilbert Paradox.[2] There is an extension of natural language containing the language of basic arithmetic. In this language, the expression 'the referent of this term plus 1' does not refer to any object, otherwise $n = n+1$ which is a contradiction. By the same reasoning, it follows that there are genuinely empty names in natural language. The extension of English with the language of basic arithmetic which only contains symbols for number one, addition, and equality is very likely to be a natural language and hence the previous objection does not seem promising.

Another way to develop the argument is this. Let T be a semantic theory according to which every proper name has a unique referent. Then the following should be true: (let us call this the 'Naïve Comprehension Principle of Objects' or (O))

(O) For any condition on properties, there is an object that has exactly those properties satisfying the condition.

(O) should be true according to T for the following reason: If (O) is not true, then there is a condition ϕ on properties such that no object has exactly those properties satisfying ϕ, but then from ϕ we can make a definite description that no object satisfies it. Then, using that definite description to fix the reference of a name, we introduce a genuinely empty name. By a similar reasoning, the following principle should be true as well (let us call this the 'Naïve Comprehension Principle of Properties' or (P)):

> (P) For any condition on objects, there is a property that has (in its extension) exactly those objects satisfying the condition.

But (O) and (P) easily run into contradiction. Let the condition on objects in (P) be a contradictory condition. From (P) it follows that there is a contradictory property. Using that contradictory property in (O), it follows that there are objects satisfying the contradictory property. Hence we have contradiction.[3]

One may reject the above argument as follows. The above mentioned contradictions follow when we are using classical logic. There are well-known Neo-Meinongian theories (Parsons (1980) and Zalta (1983) for example) blocking such paradoxes. The idea is to let have two kinds of properties (following Parsons, nuclear vs. extra-nuclear) or two kinds of predication (following Zalta, exemplifying vs. encoding). Either way, no contradiction follows. Therefore, the above argument is not conclusive.

There is a wide misinterpretation of Neo-Meinongianism according to which the language of a Neo-Meinongian theory does not contain any genuinely empty terms. Such a misinterpretation assumes that in a Neo-Meinongian theory all definite noun phrases refer to something, existent or nonexistent, possible or impossible. Another closely relevant misinterpretation of Neo-Meinongianism is that according to a Neo-Meinongian theory natural language does not contain any genuinely empty terms. For example, Salmon (2005; 48) writes that "here again, I am not making the Meinongian claim that any description, even if logically contradictory, refers to some possible or impossible object." Consistent Neo-Meinongian theories, however, do not interpret Meinong this way. As I discussed in the second chapter, neither Parsons' nor Zalta's theory requires us to reject the existence of genuinely empty definite noun phrases in the language of these theories or in natural language. Quite to the contrary, both theories assert that there are genuinely empty definite descriptions within their languages and in natural language. In particular, according to both theories the inconsistency between (O) and (P) should be handled by restricting at least one of them in one way or another. From such a restriction immediately follows that either there are not as many Meinongian objects as one may infer from (O) or that there are not as many properties as one may infer from (P). Either way, genuinely empty definite noun phrases appear in the language of the theory. The technical discussion of the paradoxes of Neo-Meinongian theories is not essential for our discussion; however, the interested reader may find such a discussion in the appendix.

From the above three arguments, I conclude that there are genuinely empty names in natural language. If so, then from the disjunction that either there is no genuinely empty name in natural language or no current version of Neo-Russellianism is acceptable, the second disjunct should be concluded: no current version of Neo-Russellianism is acceptable.

§4.4. Semi-Meinongian Neo-Russellianism?

A proponent of Neo-Russellianism, however, may interpret the above conclusion this way: though no current version of Neo-Russellianism is acceptable, there is no deep problem with Neo-Russellianism. In what follows I try to show that, at least with regard to the problems raised by genuinely empty names, Neo-Russellianism is deeply problematic. The issue is not only that no current version of the Neo-Russellianism is acceptable but that even a radically modified version of the view does not seem promising.

If my three arguments for the existence of genuinely empty names in natural language are sound, then we cannot solve the problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism by assuming that no empty name of natural language is really empty; there are always some names in natural language that are really empty, i.e. genuinely empty names. However, let us for a moment leave this problem aside and consider a version of Neo-Russellianism according to which *all* names of natural language have bearers. Let us call this view the 'Semi-Meinongian Neo-Russellianism' (SMNR). That the SMNR would be inconsistent, as I have argued in §3.3., might give one pause not to pursue this view further, but let us do not bother about consistency problem here.

I have called this view 'Semi-Meinongian' for different reasons. One is that a Neo-Meinongian theory has been defined in chapter 2 as a theory committed to three principles (N), (I), and (U), see Ch. 2 §3, and these principles do not necessarily have the conclusion that all names of natural language have bearers. Another reason is that SMNR sticks to Millianism and singular Russellian propositions, and for this reason it is a version of Neo-Russellianism, when many Meinongian and Neo-Meinongian theories have different views with regard to the semantic content of a proper name and the proposition semantically expressed by a sentence containing that name.

As far as I am aware, no Neo-Russellian has explicitly held a view like the SMNR, though it might be claimed that Salmon's view, and hence Soames' view too, should be construed along the lines of SMNR. Since there is no actual version of the SMNR, we may try to make a plausible, though hypothetical, version of it by using a consistent Neo-Meinongian theory like Zalta's Object Theory – it should be noted, however, that SMNR is not Zalta's own view either. Leaving aside issues raised by time, we may assume that there are two kinds of objects: ordinary (possibly existent) and abstract (necessarily nonexistent), see the appendix to this chapter for a formal presentation of Zalta's Object Theory. Ordinary and abstract objects, then, are characterized by Zalta's Object Theory; abstract objects, in particular, are characterized by the axiom of (A-OBJECT):

For *every condition* on properties, it is necessarily and always the case that there is an abstract individual that encodes just the properties satisfying the condition (A-OBJECT):

$\Box\blacksquare\ (\exists x)\ (A!x\ \&\ (\forall F)\ (xF \equiv \Psi)$ where x does not occur free in Ψ

According to the version of the SMNR we are developing, then, each name of natural language either refers to an ordinary object or to an abstract one. Hence there is no genuinely empty name in natural language. Therefore, the so called 'empty' names do not pose any specific problem for Neo-Russellianism since such names are not really empty.

Quite besides the ontological problems with the Meinongian ontology implicit in the SMNR, there are good reasons to think that SMNR does not answer important problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism. Below I discuss three of these problems.

Problem 1

First, consider the intuition of competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers concerning the *sameness* of the content of:

(1) Santa Claus in nonexistent.

(2) Father Christmas is nonexistent.

Such a speaker, though might be aware of some differences between the properties ascribed to Santa Claus and the properties ascribed to Father Christmas, seems to have the intuition that (1) and (2), in some sense, *say the same thing*. However, according to SMNR, 'Santa Claus' and 'Father Christmas' refer to two different abstract objects and hence (1) and (2) do not have the same content. Moreover, it is not obvious how (1) and (2) can say the same thing, according to SMNR, in any other way. So the SMNR cannot explain the above-mentioned intuition of same-saying.

One may react to this problem by rejecting that 'Santa Claus' and 'Father Christmas' refer to two different abstract objects. It might be said that the above problem is not essentially different from the similar problem of same saying of sentences containing co-referential names. So, to explain the intuition of same saying of (1) and (2) we should also assume that 'Santa Claus' and Father Christmas' refer to the same abstract (necessarily nonexistent) object. This reply, first of all, is not consistent with Zalta's Object Theory, or other Neo-Meinongian theories like Parsons' on the scene. According to these views, Santa Claus is not Father Christmas. The reason that 'Santa Claus' and 'Father Christmas' are not co-referential is that abstract (necessarily nonexistent) objects are characterized in terms of the properties ascribed to them. Therefore, since the properties ascribed to Santa Claus are not exactly the same as the properties ascribed to Father Christmas, then Santa Claus is not Father Christmas. Second, if we accept that the abstract object Santa Claus is the same as the abstract object Father Christmas, then it would absolutely be unclear how to characterize the abstract objects that serve as the referents of the so-called 'empty' names of natural language, or at least there is no current Meinongian view to do this job. Put differently, on the one hand, the consensus is that abstract objects are characterized in terms of their properties, in one way or another; on the other hand, this characterization seems to be too narrow to account for the kind of intuition in question.

Another reaction to the above problem might be to appeal to the pragmatic implicatures of utterances of (1) and (2) or some psychological explanation similar to the one employed by Braun and Saul. These replies also do not seem promising. First, as I have argued in chapters 1 and 3, such explanations do not provide successful defenses of Neo-Russellianism in general. Second, and more importantly, if such explanations are successful then why we do not just appeal to them from the outset without using Meinongian objects as the referents of the so-called 'empty' names of natural language.

Problem 2

As the second problem for SMNR, consider

(3) Santa Claus is Santa Claus.

(4) Santa Claus is Père Noël.[4]

and the intuition of competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers concerning the *informativeness* of (4), in contrast with (3), in the following context. A competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speaker uses the names 'Santa Claus' and 'Père Noël' correctly, since she is competent; she does not have inconsistent beliefs about Santa Claus or Père Noël, since she is rational; she is aware of the story/myth of Santa Claus as is widely popular in English speaking countries and the story/myth of Père Noël as is widely popular in French speaking countries, since she is well-informed; and finally, she is careful about the judgments she makes, since she is contemplative. As a plausible assumption, let us assume that the stories/myths of Santa Claus and Père Noël have the same origin; both stories/myths have been made around the same character, for example, a Turkish religious man whose real name was 'Nicholas'. As we know, properties ascribed to Saint Nicholas are not identical with properties ascribed to Santa Claus or Père Noël, or assume so. Now let us suppose that the speaker is informed that the stories/myths of Santa Claus and Père Noël have the same origin; in other words, the speaker is informed that both stories/myths have been made around Nicholas.

In the above context, it seems that the speaker has different intuitions with regard to the informativeness of (3) and (4): while (3) does not seem to be informative, if true, (4) seems to be informative, if true. Nevertheless, SMNR does not account for this latter intuition. If 'Santa Claus' and 'Père Noël' refer to the same abstract (necessarily nonexistent) object, then (4) is true but not informative (it is not informative since the content of (4) is just a self-identity). If 'Santa Claus' and 'Père Noël' refer to two different abstract (necessarily nonexistent) objects, then (4) is simply false (it is false since no two different objects, ordinary or abstract, are identical). In either case, SMNR does not explain the intuition of a competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speaker concerning the informativeness of (4).

A proponent of Neo-Russellianism may reply that the above problem is not essentially different from Frege's puzzle. Therefore, whatever explanation a Neo-Russellian view has for Frege's puzzle can be applied to the above problem. This reply has at least three problems. First, if the Neo-Russellian explanation for Frege's puzzle can be applied to the above problem without assuming that empty names refer to abstract objects, as for example in the case of Braun's view, then it is not obvious why one should accept the SMNR from the outset. Second, as I explained above, according to Zalta's Object Theory or other Neo-Meinongian theories abstract or Meinongian objects are characterized in terms of their properties. Since the set of properties ascribed to Santa Claus is not exactly the same as the set of properties ascribed to Père Noël, they are different abstract or Meinongian objects. Recall that Neo-Russellianism account for the truth of 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' in terms of the co-referentiality of 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus'. Since 'Santa Claus' and 'Père Noël' are not co-referential according to Zalta's Object theory or other Neo-Meinongian theories, there is no similar account for the truth of (4). Third, in the case of Frege's puzzle, the intuition of informativeness of 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' might be explained in terms of speaker's lack of knowledge of the reference of 'Hesperus' and 'Phosphorus'. In the above case, however, the speaker is well-informed; she knows that both Santa Claus and Père Noël do not exist and simultaneously holds the intuition that (4) is informative. This, in turn, may suggest that information value of names is not the same as their semantic referents.

Problem 3

Here is the third problem for SMNR; the intuition of competent, rational, well-informed, and contemplative speakers concerning the truth of some atomic simple sentences containing empty names. Consider:

(5) Le Verrier was looking for Vulcan.

uttered by a competent and rational speaker who is well aware of the nonexistence of Vulcan and Le Verrier's view about Vulcan. Such a speaker seems to have the intuition that (5) is true. According to SMNR, however, for (5) to be true, 'Vulcan' should refer to the abstract (necessarily nonexistent) object Vulcan, or some kind of nonexistent object. Then, if SMNR is correct, from (5) it follows that:

(6) Le Verrier was looking for some abstract object.

But accepting (6) raises a serious epistemological problem: no piece of evidence available to us, nor to Le Verrier, indicates that he was looking for an abstract (necessarily nonexistent) object. If Le Verrier was looking for an abstract object, he would not try to observe it – given that abstract objects are not observable and Le Verrier knew this. If Le Verrier was looking for an abstract object, he would not try to calculate its orbit – given that abstract objects do not have orbit in the sense that Le Verrier was calculating for Vulcan and Le Verrier knew this, and etc. These pieces of evidence all indicate that *we* are rationally entitled to reject (6) – regardless of Le Verrier's own view about (6). It is worth mentioning that there is no similar issue with regard to referring names for Neo-Russellianism. For example, from the truth of 'Le Verrier was looking for Adams'[5] it follows that 'Le Verrier was looking for some ordinary object' and this latter claim does not seem puzzling.

The above considerations plus the arguments for the existence of genuinely empty names in natural language strongly suggest that even Semi-Meinongian Neo-

Russellianism is not a successful version of Neo-Russellianism, at least with regard to the problems raised by empty names.

§4.5. Conclusion

Empty names raise serious problems for Neo-Russellianism. In this thesis, I focused on three Neo-Russellian views. I argued that none of these views provides a successful defense of Neo-Russellianism. From this we can conclude that Neo-Russellianism, in its current versions, is not acceptable. Nevertheless, one may want to reject the existence of empty names in natural language and therefore erase the problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism altogether. I provided three arguments that it cannot be the case; there are always genuinely empty names in natural language. As a hypothetical defense of Neo-Russellianism, one may suggest a radically modified version of Neo-Russellianism: Semi-Meinongian Neo-Russellianism. According to this view, all names of natural language refer. Quite besides the arguments for the inevitability of genuinely empty names in natural language and problems with Meinongian ontologies, I showed that even Semi-Meinongian Neo-Russellianism does not answer important problems raised by empty names for Neo-Russellianism. At least with regard to such problems, Neo-Russellianism is deeply problematic. Furthermore, since the formulation of these problems only requires *atomic simple* sentences containing genuinely empty names, these problems threaten the heart of Neo-Russellianism: Millianism and the thesis of singular Russellian propositions. I am inclined to conclude that at least one of these theses should be rejected: either Millianism or the thesis of singular Russellian propositions is false.

§4.6. Appendix

In what follows I discuss a well known paradox for Neo-Meinongian theories: the Clark-Rapaport paradox. The paradox indicates that Neo-Meinongian theories cannot simultaneously appeal to both the Naïve Comprehension Principle of Objects (O) and the Naïve Comprehension Principle of Properties (P), as these principles have been formulated in the body of this chapter. Therefore these principles should be restricted in one way or another. Therefore, it is not the case that according to Neo-Meinongian theories every definite noun phrase refers to a unique object.

The paradox takes different forms depending on the language in which it is formulated. Here I discuss the paradox in two forms: first, I report the paradox as has been formulated by Rapaport (1978; 165-73), and then, I formulate it in the language of Zalta's Object Theory. Here are these two formulations.

I. The Clark-Rapaport Paradox (Formulation I)

A Meinongian object is represented by a set of properties. Rapaport defines the existence (or Sein) of a Meinongian object as follows:

The M-object $< F, G, \ldots >$ has Sein (or exists) iff

$\exists\alpha$ [α is an actual object & α ex F & α ex G…]

He distinguishes between two basic kinds of predication; one of them has been shown by 'c' and the other by 'ex'. The former is termed 'constituency'; '$F \; c \; o$' means the property F is a constituent of M-object *o*. The latter is termed 'exemplification'; 'α ex F' means the existent or nonexistent object α satisfies the property F (in the classical sense of satisfaction). In addition, if the M–object *o* has Sein, then we call

$\{\alpha$: α is actual & $\forall F \, [F \; c \; o \rightarrow \alpha \text{ ex } F]\}$

the 'set of Sein-correlates of *o*', and we write

$\alpha \text{ SC } o$

when α is a Sein-correlate of *o*.

An M-object is a self Sein-correlate if it is its own Sein-correlate, namely:

$o \text{ SC } o$ iff $(\forall F) \, [F \; c \; o \rightarrow o \text{ ex } F]$

Then by λ introduction, Rapaport defines the property of being self Sein-correlate (SSC) and the property of being non self Sein-correlate (NSS) as follows:

$\text{SSC} =_{df} \lambda x\ (\forall F)\ [F \subset x \rightarrow (x \text{ ex } F)]$

$\text{NSS} =_{df} \lambda x\ (\exists F)\ [F \subset x\ \&\ \sim(x \text{ ex } F)]$

The paradox is this. Define the M-object *h* as the object that its sole constituting property is NSS. So, *h* is <NSS>, recall that M-objects are represented by ordered pairs of their constituting properties. Does *h* exemplify SSC? It can be shown that both that *h* exemplifies SSC and that *h* does not exemplify SSC result in contradiction.

Here is the argument. First, assume *h* exemplifies SSC. So, <NSS> exemplifies SSC. Then, by definition of SSC, <NSS> has to exemplify all of its constituting properties. But <NSS> has only one constituting property, namely NSS. Therefore, <NSS> exemplifies NSS (or <NSS> ex NSS). But then by definition of NSS, plus the fact that <NSS> has one and only one constituting property, it follows that ~ (<NSS> ex NSS), contradicting the previous assumption that <NSS> ex NSS. Second, assume *h* does not exemplify SSC. So, <NSS> does not exemplify SSC. Apply the definition of SSC. Since <NSS> does not exemplify SSC, there should be a constituting property of <NSS> such that <NSS> does not exemplify it. But <NSS> has only one property, namely NSS. So, <NSS> does not exemplify NSS (or ~ (<NSS> ex NSS)). But then by definition of NSS, if an M-object does not exemplify NSS, then it exemplifies every constituting property of itself. So, the object <NSS> exemplifies every constituting property of itself. But then since <NSS> has only one constituting property, namely NSS, it follows that <NSS> ex NSS, contradicting the previous assumption that ~ (<NSS> ex NSS).

II. The Clark-Rapaport Paradox (Formulation II)

To formulate the paradox in the language of Zalta's Object Theory we need to briefly introduce Zalta's Object Theory first. Before introducing logical axioms and principles of the theory, two significant aspects of the theory should be mentioned.

First, the theory has two basic kinds of predication: exemplifying vs. encoding. '$Fx_1 x_2 \ldots x_n$' reads $x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n$ exemplify F and is true if and only if the ordered multiple of mentioned objects $<x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n>$ belongs to the exemplification extension of the property F. 'xF' reads x encodes F; In Zalta's (1983, 12) words, "we shall say that an object encodes a property instead of saying that the object is determined by the property".

Second, the theory has two basic kinds of objects: ordinary objects vs. abstract objects. Using the distinguished property E! (physical existence), ordinary (O!) and abstract objects (A!) can be defined as follows:

$O!\,x =_{df} \Diamond E!\,x$

$A!\,x =_{df} {\sim}\Diamond E!\,x$

Zalta's Object Theory can be divided into two parts: a logical foundation and a proper theory. The logical foundation of the theory consists in three principles as follow (black operators are temporal operators):[6]

1. If it is possibly or sometimes the case that an individual encodes a property, then that individual encodes that property necessarily and always (logical axiom):

$(\forall x)\ (\forall F)\ (\Diamond\blacklozenge xF \rightarrow \Box\blacksquare\ xF)$

2. For every *exemplification* condition on individuals, Φ, that does not involve quantification over relations, there is a property which is such that, necessarily and always, all and only the individuals satisfying the condition exemplify it (logical theorem):

$(\exists F)\ \Box\blacksquare\ (\forall x)\ (Fx \equiv \Phi)$

3. Two properties are identical just in case it is necessarily and always the case that they are encoded by the same individuals (definition):

$F{=}G =_{df} \Box\blacksquare\ (\forall x)\ (xF \equiv xG)$

And the proper theory relies on four principles:

4. Ordinary individuals necessarily and always fail to encode properties (proper axiom):

$(\forall x)\ (O!x \rightarrow \Box\blacksquare\ {\sim}(\exists x)\ xF)$

5. For *every condition* on properties, it is necessarily and always the case that there is an abstract individual that encodes just the properties satisfying the condition (proper axiom): (A-OBJECT)

$\Box\blacksquare\ (\exists x)\ (A!x\ \&\ (\forall F)\ (xF \equiv \Psi))$ where x does not occur free in Ψ

6. Two individuals are identical if and only if one of the following conditions holds: (a) they are both ordinary individuals and they necessarily and always exemplify the same properties, or (b) they are both abstract individuals and they necessarily and always encode the same properties (definition):

$$x = y \ =_{df}$$

$$(O!x \ \& \ O!y \ \& \ \Box\blacksquare(\forall F)\,(Fx \equiv Fy)) \vee (A!x \ \& \ A!y \ \& \ \Box\blacksquare(\forall F)\,(xF \equiv yF))$$

7. If two individual are identical (or two properties are identical), then anything true about the one is also true about the other (proper axiom):

$$\alpha{=}\beta \rightarrow (\Phi(\alpha,\alpha) \equiv \Phi(\alpha,\beta)\,)$$

It is worth mentioning that this formulation of Zalta's Object Theory avoids the Clark-Rapaport paradox. Note that the above theory does not contain the Naïve Comprehension Principle of Properties (P) introduced in the body of this chapter; instead, Zalta's Object Theory has a restricted comprehension principle of properties, i.e. 2 above.

The Clark-Rapaport paradox, then, can be formulated as follows:[7]

The Clark-Rapaport Paradox

1- $a_0\,[\lambda x\,(\exists F)\,(xF \& \sim Fx)]$

2- $[\lambda x\,(F)\,(xF \supset Fx)]\,a_0$

3- $(F)\,(a_0F \supset Fa_0)$

4- $a_0[\lambda x\,(\exists F)\,(xF \ \& \sim Fx) \supset [\lambda x\,(\exists F)\,(xF \& \sim Fx)]\,a_0$

5- $[\lambda x\,(\exists F)\,(xF \& \sim Fx)]\,a_0$

6- $(\exists F)\,(a_0F \& \sim Fa_0)$

7- $\sim(F)\,(a_0F \supset Fa_0)$

8- $(y)\,([\lambda x\,(F)\,(xF \supset Fx)]\,y \equiv (F)\,(yF \supset Fy))$

9- $[\lambda x\,(F)\,(xF \supset Fx)]\,a_0 \equiv (F)\,(a_0F \supset Fa_0)$

10- $\sim[\lambda x\,(F)\,(xF \supset Fx)]\,a_0$

11- $\sim [\lambda x\ (F)\ (xF \supset Fx)]\ a_0$

12- $(y)\ ([\lambda x\ (F)\ (xF \supset Fx)]\ y \equiv (F)\ (yF \supset Fy))$

13- $[\lambda x\ (F)\ (xF \supset Fx)]\ a_0 \equiv (F)\ (a_0F \supset Fa_0)$

14- $\sim(F)\ (a_0F \supset Fa_0)$

15- $(\exists F)\ (a_0F \ \&\ \sim Fa_0)$

16- $a_0\ [\lambda x\ (\exists F)\ (xF \ \&\ \sim Fx)]\ \&\ \sim[\lambda x\ (\exists F)\ (xF \ \&\ \sim Fx)]a_0$

17- $\sim[\lambda x\ (\exists F)\ (xF \ \&\ \sim Fx)]\ a_0$

18- $(y)\ ([\lambda x\ (\exists F)\ (xF\& \sim Fx)]\ y \equiv (\exists F)\ (yF \ \&\ \sim Fy))$

19- $[\lambda x\ (\exists F)\ (xF \ \&\ \sim Fx)]\ a_0 \equiv (\exists F)\ (a_0F \ \&\ \sim Fa_0)$

20- $\sim(\exists F)\ (a_0F \ \&\ \sim Fa_0)$

21- $(F)\ (a_0F \supset Fa_0)$

22- $[\lambda x\ (F)\ (xF \supset Fx)]\ a_0$

Endnotes

Chapter 0

[1] "It [Vulcan] was predicted in 1859 by Urbain-Jean-Joseph Le Verrier (1811–77) to account for an unexplained component of the precession of Mercury's orbit. Sightings were reported between 1859 and 1878, but these were not confirmed subsequently by observations made either during solar eclipses or when the planet was predicted to cross the Sun. The anomalies of Mercury's orbit were later explained by Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity." (Encyclopedia Britannica) <http://www.britannica.com/ebc/article-9382184>.

[2] Kaplan (1989a, 560, n.76) introduces 'Newman' as follows: "let's call the first child to be born in the twenty-first century 'Newman 1'". Instead I just use 'Newman'. Given the context of introduction of 'Newman' (1989), it is a name for an individual in the future.

[3] Salmon (2005, 62) introduces 'Nothan' as follows: "…let E_{NS} be the ovum from which I actually sprang. I have introduced the name 'Nothan-0' for the merely possible individual who would have sprang from the union of S and E_{NS} had they been united in the normal manner." Instead I just use 'Nothan'.

[4] Given 'Nothan' is introduced as above and 'Nathan' refers to Nathan Salmon: "there is in some sense a definite set that is actually referred to by this piece of set-theoretic notation ['{Nothan, Nathan}'] (assuming it is properly interpreted), yet that set could not possibly exits. Even if Nothan had existed, {Nothan, Nathan} still could not do so" (Salmon, 2005, 62).

[5] For a definition of Neo-Russellianism, as I use the term, see Ch. 1, §.1.

[6] By 'the Russellian (structured) proposition expressed by that sentence' I mean a structured entity whose constituents are individuals, properties and relations which are the semantic contents of the names and predicates used in that sentence. Russell once (1903) has defended this view.

[7] In most cases, when I say that, for example, this name has such a property, properly speaking I mean some particular use of the name has the property. And the same goes for predicates, relations, and sentences.

[8] Here, by 'the Principle of Compositionality' I mean the following specific version of this principle: If a proper name lacks semantic content, then the sentence containing that name lacks semantic content.

[9] By 'a sentence' I mean a particular use of a declarative sentence of English.

[10] Also see Braun and Saul (2002).

[11] By 'simple sentences' I mean sentences that do not contain any 'that'-clauses.

Chapter 1

[1] By 'a name' I mean an ordinary proper name in a *natural language* like English. And by 'the semantic content of a name' I mean the semantic contribution of the name into the proposition semantically expressed by the sentence containing that name.

[2] By 'a predicate' I mean an ordinary predicate in a *natural language* like English. And by 'the semantic content of a predicate' I mean the semantic contribution of the predicate into the proposition semantically expressed by the sentence containing that predicate.

[3] By 'a sentence' I mean a declarative sentence of a *natural language* like English. And by 'the semantic content of a sentence' I mean the proposition semantically expressed by that sentence.

[4] See footnote 6 of the previous chapter.

[5] 'S' should be replaced by an appropriate English sentence; 'S' should not be replaced by the name of an English sentence.

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[6] See, for example, Nathan Salmon (1986; 1987; 1990; 1998; 2002; 2005; 2007), Scott Soames (1987; 1988; 1995; 2002), David Braun (1991; 1993; 1998; 2002; 2005), and Fred. Adams et al. (1992; 1994; 1997; 2004; 2007).

[7] Or more exactly, a particular use of a proper name.

[8] 'SM' stands for assumption.

[9] By 'atomic simple sentences' I mean those atomic sentences that do not contain any 'that'-clauses.

[10] Or more exactly, a particular use of a sentence.

[11] Also see Braun (1993, 451).

[12] A similar problem can be introduced with regard to attitude (or indirect) report sentences; though the detail of the argument is different, the basic idea is the same. Here is this problem.

Problem 2`. Apparent *Meaningfulness* of *Attitude* (or Indirect) *Report Sentences* with 'that'-clauses containing Empty Names.

Consider:

(3) Le Verrier believes that Vulcan is a planet.
(4) Stephen Hawking says that Vulcan does not exist.

Here is the sketch of the problem: On the one hand, ordinary speakers judge (or have the intuition) that (3) (or (4)) is meaningful. Assume that this entails that (3) (or (4)) has semantic content. On the other hand, Millianism implies that (3) (or (4)) does not have semantic content. Hence, Millianism is not correct. The argument for the claim that Millianism implies that (3) (or (4)) does not have semantic content, in turn, goes like this. If Millianism is correct, then the name 'Vulcan' has no semantic content. If a name lacks semantic content, a sentence containing that name lacks semantic content. Therefore, if Millianism is correct, the following sentences lack semantic content:

(5) Vulcan is a planet.
(6) Vulcan does not exist.

But if (5) (or (6)) lacks semantic content then the 'that'-clause in (3) (or (4)) lacks semantic content. If a 'that'-clause lacks semantic content, a sentence containing that 'that'-clause lacks semantic content (the appropriate version of the principle of compositionality is required). Therefore, if Millianism is correct, (3) (or (4)) lacks semantic content.

Here is the above argument in a logical style:

(PM2`)

(i) Ordinary speakers have the intuition that (3) (or (4)) is meaningful.
(ii) If ordinary speakers have intuition that a sentence is meaningful, then that sentence has semantic content.
(iii) (3) (or (4)) has semantic content.
(iv) If Millianism is correct, then (3) (or (4)) does not have semantic content.
So
(v) Millianism is not correct.

Premises (i) and (ii) do the same job as they do in (PM2). (iv) can be justified as I explained above. (PM2) and (PM2`) differ in the justification of their premise (iv) respectively: in the case of (PM2)-(iv), we only need one version of the principle of compositionality with regard to the referent of a proper name and the semantic content of the whole sentence containing that name; however, in the case of (PM2`), in addition to that, we need another version of the principle of compositionality with respect to the referent of a 'that'-clause and the semantic content of the whole sentence containing that 'that'-clause. As a result, if Neo-Russellianism gives up on its claim about the semantic content of 'that'-clauses in a suitable way, (PM2`) might be avoided, though (PM2) still persists.

[13] Or more exactly, a particular use of a sentence.

[14] See Braun (1993, 452).

[15] A similar problem can be introduced with respect to attitude (or indirect) report sentences; though the detail of the argument is different, the basic idea is the same. Here is this problem.

Problem 3`. Apparent *Truth Value* of *Attitude* (or indirect) *Report Sentences* with 'that'-clauses containing Empty Names.

Consider:

(10) Stephen Hawking believes that Vulcan exists.
(11) Le Verrier says that Sherlock Holmes is a grapefruit.

Here is the sketch of the problem: On the one hand, ordinary speakers judge or hold the intuition that (10) (or (11)) is false. Assume that this entails that (10) (or (11)) has the truth value of falsehood, and hence a truth value. On the other hand, Millianism implies that (10) (or (11)) does not have any truth value. Hence, Millianism is not correct. The argument for the claim that Millianism implies that (10) (or (11)) does not have any truth value, in turn, goes like this. If Millianism is correct, then the name 'Vulcan' has no semantic content. If a name lacks semantic content, then a sentence containing that name lacks semantic content. Therefore if Millianism is correct, following sentences lack semantic content:

(7) Vulcan exists.
(8) Sherlock Holmes is a grapefruit.

But if (7) (or (8)) lacks semantic content then the 'that'-clause in (10) (or (11)) lacks referent. If a 'that'-clause lacks referent, a sentence containing that 'that'-clause lacks truth value (the appropriate version of the principle of compositionality is required). Therefore, if Millianism is correct, (10) (or (11)) lacks truth value.

Here is the above argument in a logical style:

(PM3`)

  (i) Ordinary speakers have the intuition that (10) (or (11)) is false.
  (ii) If Ordinary speakers have the intuition that a sentence is false, then that sentence has the truth value of falsehood, and hence a truth value.
  (iii) (10) (or (11)) has a truth value.
  (iv) If Millianism is correct, then (10) (or (11)) does not have any truth value.
  So
  (v) Millianism is not correct.

Premises (i) and (ii) do the same job as they do in (PM3). (iv) can be justified as I explained above. The difference between (PM3) and (PM3`) resembles the difference between (PM2) and (PM2`).

The above argument, (PM3`), can be repeated by

(3) Le Verrier believes that Vulcan is a planet.
(4) Stephen Hawking says that Vulcan does not exist.

instead of (10) (or (11)). The only difference is this: this time the intuition about (3) (or (4)) is that it is true. Again from the premise that (3) (or (4)) is true, it follows that it has a truth value. The rest of the argument is the same.

[16] The problem parallel to problem 3 for attitude (or indirect) report sentences has been discussed in the previous footnote.

[17] See Kripke (1979/2001, 411).

[18] 'S' should be replaced by an appropriate English sentence inside and outside all quotation marks. Also, the sentence replacing 'S' is to lack indexical or pronominal devices or ambiguities, that would ruin the intuitive sense of the principle.

[19] (CDP): If a competent and rational English speaker, on reflection, sincerely descents from 'S', then she does not believe that S.
Same restrictions apply as DP.

[20] See Salmon (1989/2007).

[21] Strong Disquotational Principle (SDP) is the conjunction of (DP) and (CDP).

[22] See Soames (2002, Ch.1), Braun (1998; 2006).

[23] Assume that there is only *one* story or novel containing a specific fictional name, not for example a series, written by *one* and only one author.

[24] Given the specified conditions.

[25] For some functional views concerning propositions see Carnap (1947), Hintikka (1962), and Montague (1974).

[26] For some structuralist views concerning propositions that do *not* take the constituents of propositions to be objects, properties, and relations see Lewis (1970), Cresswell (1975; 85), and Barwise and Perry (1983).

[27] For some Russellian Structured Proposition Theories see Salmon (1986) and Soames (1987; 1988; 1995; 2002). Such propositions might be called 'Russellian' because Russell (1903) once defended such a view, or maybe, as David Kaplan (1989a; 484) points out, because this kind of propositions is essential for the logic of Whitehead and Russell's *Principia Mathematica* (1927).

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[28] For a recent discussion of another kind of singular propositions that contain singular modes of presentation (rather objects and individual) see Boer (2007; Ch. 9) – such propositions have been claimed to be object-dependent without containing objects themselves.

[29] For a critical evaluation of these accounts see Everett (2003). For some replies to Everett's criticisms see Adams et al (2004) and Braun (2005).

[30] Throughout the paper, when I say that, for example, this name has such a property, properly speaking I mean some specific use of the name has the property. And the same goes for predicates, relations, and sentences.

[31] As Braun (1993) has pointed out, Kaplan's footnote in *Demonstratives* (1989) might be misleading in this regard:

> When writing about the use of braces to mark subject places in singular propositions, Kaplan says:
>
> > This technique can also be used to resolve another confusion in Russell. He argued that a sentence containing a nondenoting directly referential term [...] would be meaningless, presumably because the purported singular proposition would be incomplete. But the braces themselves can fill out the singular proposition, and if they contain nothing, no more anomalies need result than what the development of Free Logic already inured us to. (Kaplan 1989, p.496, fn.13)
>
> This passage may suggest that unfilled propositions are *complete,* because their subject positions are occupied (are filled out) by the empty set. This may suggest that on an unfilled proposition view [gappy proposition view], the semantic value of 'Vulcan' is {}. But this is contrary to Kaplan's intent (personal communication), and contrary to The Unfilled Proposition View.
>
> (Braun, 1993, 468, n.25)

[32] Note that (PM3)-(v)-(d) is the same as (PM2)-(iv)-(d)

[33] I have adjusted sentence numbers respectively throughout the paper.

[34] In a parallel way, this reply suggests that the following is false as well: If ordinary speakers' have the intuition that a sentence is true, then that sentence has a truth value (the truth value of truth).

[35] Note that (PM4)-(v)-(d), (PM3)-(v)-(d), and (PM2)-(iv)-(d) all are the same.

[36] Note that (PM5)-(ii)-(d), (PM4)-(v)-(d), (PM3)-(v)-(d), and (PM2)-(iv)-(d) all are the same.

[37] Braun has added in the footnote that "This claim is almost certainly too strong, because having a tacit belief may not require having token mental representations. But issues about tacit belief are orthogonal to my concerns here, so I will ignore them. For discussion, see Crimmins 1992, 58- 73, and Richard 1990, 47-57."

[38] Braun's use of "ways of believing", as he himself points out (1998; 565, n.18), might be misleading. The general idea goes like this: "Russellianism says that believing is a binary relation between a person and a proposition. But most Russellians (including Salmon and Soames) hold that this relation is *mediated*: one believes a proposition in virtue of standing in some significant psychological relation to a third entity that determines the proposition believed. The third entity is variously called "propositional guise" or a "mode of presentation" for a proposition, or a "way of taking" or "way of grasping" a proposition; I will often call it "way of believing" (Braun; 1998, 564-5). As I explicated the terminology, ways of believing are subtly different from propositional guises; ways of believing, as some mental states, are characterized by both propositional guises *and* some specific sort of causal role (for example, the causal role ascribed to a mental state of believing or a way of believing is different form the causal role ascribed to a mental state of entertaining or a way of entertaining). Propositional guises, in turn, can plausibly be construed as mental sentences in one construal of Braun's theory.

[39] As Braun points out, this assumption might not be suitable in cases like Kripke's Peter.

[40] It seems that this step of Braun's formulation of the problem is not adequate. It appears plausible to assume a case in which a competent and rational speaker has the same intuition with regard to the truth value of two sentences while holds the intuition that only one of them is informative. For instance, one may have the intuition that both 'Hesperus is Hesperus' and 'Hesperus is Phosphorus' are true when simultaneously hold the intuition that only the latter is nontrivial and hence informative. I leave aside this issue here.

[41] I have made this response following Braun's reply to problem 2. For more on this reply, see Braun (2005; 600).

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[42] In fact, one interpretation of the phenomenon in question, i.e. that CRWC speakers hold the same kind of cognitive relation with both kinds of sentences, may suggest that BT's twofold semantic analysis of these sentences, in terms of singular Russellian propositions and gappy propositions, is not appropriate.

[43] For arguments for necessarily false beliefs and meaningless beliefs, see Sorensen (1996; 2002). I have made my example from one of Sorensen's examples (2002).

[44] Everett (2003; 12-3) raises a similar issue.

[45] If we take negation in (23), (24), and (25) as a wide scope negation, then the proposition expressed by them can be represented by:

(23/24/25p) <NOT<___, Existence>>

This does not bring about any substantial change in my discussion.

[46] An explanation along this line has been offered by Braun and Saul (2002) for ordinary speakers' intuition concerning the difference in truth values of sentences like:

(26) Superman leaps more tall buildings than Clark Kent.

(27) Superman leaps more tall buildings than Super man.

Or

(28) Clark Kent went into a phone booth, and Superman came out.

(29) Clark Kent went into a phone booth, and Clark Kent came out.

Braun and Saul argue that this intuition is incorrect: such sentences cannot differ in truth value. They explain this incorrect intuition by what they call (p.17) 'Mistaken Evaluation Explanation'. The basic idea is this: when we quickly evaluate the proposition semantically expressed by (26) and (27), at some stage of evaluation we make a mistake. This mistake leads us to the incorrect judgment that the truth value of (26) is different from the truth value of (27). Two points are worth mentioning with this regard. First, though this explanation aims to account for ordinary speakers' resistance to substitution of co-referential (or co-non-referential) proper names in simple sentences like (26) and (27), or (28) and (29), it does *not* aim to generalize this result over all atomic simple sentences. (By 'simple sentences' I mean sentences that do not contain quotations, 'that'-clauses, or any other context that is *suspicious* of being non-extensional). As a result, this explanation does not predict a parallel resistance to substitution of co-referential names in simple sentence like:

(17) Hesperus is visible in the evening.

(18) Phosphorus is visible in the evening.

For discussion of this point, see Braun and Saul (2002; 27-9). Second, the above explanation does not aim to account for ordinary (or sophisticated) speakers' resistance to substitution of co-referential (or co-non-referential) proper names in belief report sentences (or, in general, in any sentence containing propositional attitude verbs). For discussion of this point, see Braun and Saul (2002; 30-1).

[47] Here I have ignored problems raised by different utterances over time.

[48] One point seems worth mentioning here. One may reply, in defense of Braun's view, that BT explains speakers' intuition concerning the *apparent* different contents of simple sentences like:

(17) Hesperus is visible in the evening.

(18) Phosphorus is visible in the evening.

in terms of different propositional guises, not the singular Russellian proposition expressed by them – since they both express the same proposition. So, it is not the case that speakers' intuitions about the difference in the contents of simple sentences are always explained in terms of SSRP's expressed by them. Therefore, it would not be odd if BT explains the intuition of difference in the contents of (30) and (32) in terms of propositional guises, rather than singular Russellian propositions.

The above reply, however, misses a significant point: we are here concerned about the intuition of *CRWC* speakers concerning the sameness and difference of the content of simple sentences. That such speakers are well-informed, as I emphasized earlier, plays a crucial role in the discussion. Well-informed speakers know that Hesperus is Phosphorus and therefore do not hold the intuition that (17) and (18) differ in the content, at least in the sense we are concerned about. Being well-informed is crucial for the discussion because this is exactly the intuition of such speakers concerning aboutness and what is said that provides one of the strongest reasons for the acceptance of singular Russellian propositions. Therefore, if the intuition of such speakers concerning aboutness and what is said is explained in terms of singular Russellian propositions, we expect that their intuition concerning the difference in aboutness and what is said, and hence their intuition concerning the difference in the

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content, are explained in the same way, i.e. by means of singular Russellian propositions. This violates the above defense of BT according to that propositional guises explain the intuition of difference in the content.

[49] I am grateful to Ray Elugardo and Adam Morton for raising this point.

[50] Assume (34), which contains both an English and a French proper name, is a legitimate sentence as (33).

[51] Here is the explanation BT may provide in another style:

(i) A CRWC speaker who understands both (33) and (34) can *take* (33/34p) under a purely Santa-Claus-ish propositional guise (or way of taking).
(ii) Taking (33/34p) under a purely Santa-Claus-ish propositional guise may dispose the speaker to believe that (33) is true.
(iii) The speaker can *take* (33/34p) under a mixed Santa-Claus- Père-Noël-ish propositional guise (or way of taking).
(iv) Taking (33/34p) under a mixed Santa-Claus-Père-Noël-ish propositional guise may dispose the speaker to believe that (34) is false.
(v) Since taking (33/34p) under a purely Santa-Claus-ish or a mixed Santa-Claus-Père-Noël-ish propositional guise may bring about different beliefs concerning the truth value of (33) and (34) respectively, the CRWC speaker may have different intuitions concerning the informativeness of (33) and (34) respectively.

[52] Everett (2003; 9-12) raises a similar issue.

[53] The acceptance of the entailment is justified since the entailment itself is sound. If BT is correct, all atomic gappy propositions are false. Therefore, if BT is correct, (36p) is false. Given that (36p) is true, by Modus Tollens, BT is not correct.

[54] It should be noted, however, that the argument relies on the assumption that *having good reason to believe that P* is closed under entailment. Some, Dretske and Nozick for example, do not accept this assumption.

[55] Personal communication.

[56] Namely, '*a*' is substituted by a referring proper name and 'S' with a suitable English sentence.

[57] Namely, '*a*' is substituted by a referring proper name and 'S' with a suitable English sentence.

[58] I am grateful to Jeff Pelletier for raising this point.

[59] It might be said that singular Russellian propositions might also be non-transparent and hence the same problem may arise. In reply, two points should be considered. First, it is correct that if a singular Russellian proposition is non-transparent in the same sense as a gappy proposition, then *having good reasons* does not properly explain why a competent and rational speaker who does not have introspective and a priori access to the proposition in question does actually believe *it*. Second, it seems that Neo-Russellian theorists are more prone to advocate an *externalist* account of belief's warrant (concerning a specific object) rather than an account like having good reasons which seems more internalist. In other word, though Neo-Russellian semantics seems more coherent with an externalist epistemology of belief, BT suggests an internalist epistemology for believing gappy propositions. Therefore, Neo-Russellians, in general, may not have the same kind of issue as BT has. It might be taught that BT is easily revisable by embracing an externalist epistemology of belief with regard to gappy propositions. This, however, does not seem to be *easy*. A singular Russellian proposition is about a specific *existing* object, and hence there is an external basis, i.e. the object itself, for an externalist account of the belief concerning that object. A gappy proposition, in contrast, is *not* about a specific *existing* object, and hence there is no external basis for an externalist account of the corresponding belief. Hence, it is not easy to see how an externalist account of beliefs concerning nonexistent objects can be developed.

[60] See note 31 of this chapter.

[61] For an argument along this line, though for the claim that gappy propositions have truth value, see Braun (1993; 462).

Chapter 2

[1] Depending on our view concerning scientific theories change, we may say ‘false scientific theories’ or ‘refuted scientific theories’ or something along this line. There are other kinds of empty names originated from other kinds of obsolete theories. For example, names originated from refuted historical narrations. One example, which still is controversial, is ‘Ibn Saba’ in Muslim history.

[2] “‘Vulcan’ was the name given to a small planet proposed to exist in an orbit between Mercury and the Sun in a 19th-century hypothesis. This hypothesis has now been rendered obsolete by Albert Einstein's theory of general relativity.” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vulcan_(planet). See also Richard Baum, William Sheehan (1997). *In Search of Planet Vulcan, The Ghost in Newton's Clockwork Machine*.

[3] “Planet X is a large hypothetical planet with an orbit beyond that of Neptune. The scientific basis of the Planet X hypothesis was broadly discounted in the early 1990s and today no significant portion of the scientific community believes it to exist.” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planet_X . See also D. P. Whitmire, J. J. Matese (1985). "Periodic comet showers and planet X". *Nature* 313: 36 – 38, and G. D. Quinlan (1985). "Planet X: a myth exposed". *Nature* 363: 18 - 19.

[4] Salmon (1998/2005, 60-1) introduces ‘Noman’ as follows: “Gamete S is a particular male sperm cell of my father’s, and gamete E is a particular ovum of my mother’s, such that neither is ever actually united with any other gamete. Following Kaplan’s instructions, I have given the name ‘Noman-0’ to the particular possible individual who would have resulted from the union of S and E, had they united in the normal manner to develop into a human zygote. Noman (as I call him for short) is my merely possible brother.” So, ‘Noman does not exist’ is true at the actual world. Hence, ‘Noman’ is an empty name.

[5] ‘Socrates’ at the time being is supposed to refer to something that does not exist now. So, ‘Socrates does not exist’ is true now. Hence, ‘Socrates’ is an empty name.

[6] Kaplan (1989a, 560, n.76) writes: “let’s call the first child to be born in the twenty-first century ‘Newman 1’”_ instead I just used ‘Newman’. ‘Newman’ at the time of Kaplan’s introduction of this name is supposed to refer to something that does not exist at that time. So, ‘Newman does not exist’ is true at the time of Kaplan’s introduction of the name. Hence, ‘Newman’ is an empty name.

[7] Salmon does not use the terminology of ‘genuinely referring empty names’ and ‘genuinely nonreferring empty names’. This is my terminology. Concerning genuinely referring empty names, Salmon, after distinguishing the two main categories of fictional and mythical names, says that they are referring names, i.e. some things exist that such names refer to. Concerning genuinely nonreferring empty names, Salmon, after distinguishing different categories among them, says that they are nonreferring, i.e. nothing exists that such names refer to. Since Salmon’s fictional and mythical names are usually taken as empty names, I used ‘empty names’ in a general sense, in the sense of so-called ‘empty’ names or usually called ‘empty’ names, to obey the orthodox terminology. However, since fictional and mythical names are referring names according to Salmon, for such names I added the expression ‘genuinely referring’ before ‘empty names’ avoiding the misleading implication of the title ‘empty names’.

[8] Here is how Salmon (1998/2005, 73) introduces ‘Vulcan1’ and ‘Vulcan2’ to explain Kripke’s view in *Reference and Existence: The John Locke Lectures for 1973* (manuscript):

> In introducing the name ‘Vulcan’, Babinet [another 19-century astronomer besides Le Verrier] meant to introduce a name for a Planet, not an abstract artifact. His intentions were thwarted on both counts. Kripke holds that the dubbing ultimately resulted in two distinct uses of the name – in effect two names, ‘Vulcan$_1$’ and ‘Vulcan$_2$’ – the first as a name for an intra-Mercurial planet, and consequently thoroughly nonreferring, the second as a name of Babinet’s creation. (Presumably these two uses are supposed to be different from two other pairs of uses, corresponding to the fire god of Roman mythology and Mr. Spock’s native planet in Star Trek.) When it is said that Vulcan$_1$ does not influence Mercury’s orbit, and that Vulcan$_1$ does not exist, what it meant is that there are no true propositions that Vulcan$_1$ influences Mercury or that Vulcan$_1$ exists.

Bear in mind that the above quote is Salmon’s report of Kripke’s view, not Salmon’s view.

[9] Also see Salmon (2002/2005; 91-107).

[10] See note 6.

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[11] In the last occurrence of the pair set, instead of '{Nothan, Nathan}', Salmon uses '{Nothan, me}'.

[12] Though I am not sure that in '{Nothan, Nathan} could not possibly exist' we are using the notion of *metaphysical possibility*, I suspect that other examples can be found. If the truth of '{Nathan, Nothan} could not possibly exist' is ultimately rooted in the actual biological laws, then it is more likely that the notion of possibility we are using there is the notion of *biological possibility* (or that at least it is not metaphysical possibility).

[13] Singular terms referring to temporally nonexistent things, i.e. objects in the past or objects in the future.

[14] Singular terms referring to merely possible objects, i.e. objects that do not actually exist but might have existed.

[15] Singular terms referring to some impossible objects, i.e. objects which neither actually nor possibly exist.

[16] Singular terms that do not refer at all.

[17] α is a proper name, referring or not, and (1α)-(4α) are (Salmon, 1998/2005, 60):

1α. α is bald
2α. α is not bald
3α. α exists
4α. α does not exist

[18] Salmon introduces 'Cruly-0' as follows (1998/2005; 60): "I hereby dub the merely possible bald man in Quine's doorway (if there is exactly one there) 'Cruly-0'."

[19] Salmon sometimes uses 'Nothan-0' instead of 'Nothan' – I don't know why.

[20] By 'SM' I mean assumption.

[21] If one is suspicious of the truth of (8), the negation of (8) can be considered (given that bivalence holds).

[22] See Meinong (1904/1960), Findlay (1963), Chisholm (1967; 1972), Lambert (1983), and Reicher (2005; 2006).

[23] It should be noted, however, that (I) does not mean this: an object's existence does not imply anything about its possession of properties. 'Independence' in (I) is not meant to be a symmetric relation. An object's possession of properties is independent of its existence, i.e. it does not imply anything about the object's existence. An object's existence, however, might not be independent of its possession of properties, i.e. an object's existence may imply something about the object's possession of properties.

[24] To mention some, see Castaneda (1974), Routley (1980), Parsons (1980), Rapaport (1978; 1979; 1982), Zalta (1983; 1988), Linsky and Zalta (1991; 1994; 1996), Jacquette (1996), Pasniczek (1998), Priest (2005).

[25] For some comparisons between Neo-Meinongian theories, see Fine (1984), Rapaport (1984), Jacquette (1988; 1991), Zalta (1986; 1992), van Inwagen (2003), Reicher (2006), and Voltolini (2006).

[26] It is worth mentioning that the round square as introduced above does not have the property of *being round and a square*, though it has the property of being round and the property of being a square. In other words, the round square is a logically open object in this sense: it has the property F, it has the property G, but it does not have the property F&G. By no means, nevertheless, this implies that the round square could not have been introduced differently.

[27] PNOT's comprehension principle for objects lets us introduce many round squares in the sense that there are many sets at least containing two nuclear properties of being round and being a square. Depending on other nuclear properties added to these two, other round squares can uniquely be characterized. For verities of objects in PNOT see Parsons (1980, 19-22, 43-44).

[28] Also see Parsons (1980; Ch.1).

[29] For an early introduction of substitutional quantifiers, see R. B Marcus (1962). For the distinction between objectual vs. substitutional reading of quantifiers and a criticism of the latter, see Quine (1969). For a defense of substitutional quantification from formal aspects, see Kripke (1976). For some semantic criticisms of substitutional quantification see van Inwagn (1981) and Fine (1989). For some responses to these criticisms, see Hand (1993; 2007).

[30] For example, the description 'the golden mountain' accepts different readings according to ZAOT. It can be read as 'the unique object that exemplifies the properties of being golden and being a

mountain'. According to this reading, the description is non-denoting; it does not denote anything, abstract or not. Or it can be read as 'the unique object that encodes the properties of being golden and being a mountain and no other properties'. According to this reading, the description denotes a particular abstract object. It should be noted, however, that the description accepts other readings as well. Discussing such readings goes beyond the scope of this paper.

[31] Superscript 1 in 'p^1' or 'q^1' indicates that they are one-place properties.

[32] I have ignored problems concerning time and type; for a complete version of this definition see Zalta (1988, 242).

[33] See T. Parsons (1980, 38-44).

[34] See E. Zalta (1983, preface and 1-14)

[35] In defense of Salmon's (ARG. E), it might be replied that the nuclear/extra-nuclear distinction per se cannot protect Neo-Meinongian objects from having contradictory properties. The reason goes like this. In PNOT Neo-Meinongian objects are postulated via sets of properties. There is always a way to build a set of contradictory properties. Hence, there is always a way to postulate a contradictory Neo-Meinongian object. In other words, a proponent of (ARG. E) may argue that, not all Neo-Meinongian objects are like the existing golden mountain that has contradictory properties in some indirect way, i.e. through some logical inferences that can be blocked by distinguishing different meanings of a particular predicate involved in those logical inferences. In fact, we can postulate the following Meinongian object: the square non-square (when 'non' is used in the usual sense of negation and 'square' has been used just in *one* sense throughout the whole definite description). Therefore, Neo-Meinongian theories like PNOT are committed to contradictory objects anyway.

This criticism may appear more powerful, if we consider Parsons' methodology in postulating Neo-Meinongian objects. Parsons (1980, 18) writes:

> Now, make a list of all existing objects. Correlated with each one is a set of properties_ the set of all properties that it has:
>
> | Real Objects | Set of Properties |
> |---|---|
> | O_1 | The set of O_1's properties |
> | O_2 | The set of O_2's properties |
> | … | … |
> | … | … |
> | O_α | The set of O_α's properties |
>
> The left-hand list now exhausts the ontology of concrete objects that people like Russell, Quine, Frege, and most of us find acceptable…It is not clear how to continue the left-hand list…but you can easily see how to continue the right-hand list; just write down any other nonempty set of properties. For example, write down:
>
> {goldenness, mountainhood, …}
>
> filling in whatever properties for the ellipses that you like. Now the theory under discussion says that for any such set in the right-hand side list, there is correlated with it exactly one object. So write in "$O\alpha+1$" in the left-hand list
>
> $O_{\alpha+1}$ {goldenness, mountainhood, …}
>
> The object $O_{\alpha+1}$ can't be an existing object, because it has the properties goldenness and mountainhood_ it's a gold mountain_ and there aren't any real gold mountains.

As I mentioned above, the methodology behind postulating Neo-Meinongian objects in PNOT may be interpreted as allowing Neo-Meinongian objects to have contradictory properties. In particular, $O_{\alpha+2}$ may be defined as {square, non-square}.

However this criticism may appear strong, it is not true. The reason, in a nutshell, is this: the foregoing criticism ignores that only nuclear properties can appear in the comprehension principle of objects. In other words, Parsons can simply answer that if 'non' in 'non-square' is used in the usual sense of negation 'non-square' is not a nuclear property and hence cannot be used as a defining property of a Neo-Meinongian object (Parsons; 1980, 19-20). Put differently, all defining properties of Neo-Meinongian objects in PNOT should be nuclear properties and usual negative properties are not nuclear properties. Hence, PNOT's Neo-Meinongian objects are not contradictory objects.

[36] For complete details see Zalta (1983, Appendix A).

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[37] See Meinong (1904/1960; 84-85). For a careful examination of this principle see Lambert (1983), *Meinong and the Principle of Independence.* For a criticism of Lambert's interpretation of the Principle of Independence see Zalta (1986). I have used Reicher's (2005) formulation. For a different formulation of the Principle of Independence see Jacquette (1996, Part I, Ch. I and V).

[38] I have avoided calling any argument '(ARG. I)' being afraid of possible confusion with the principle of independence (I).

[39] It is worth mentioning that by 'quantifiers' and 'objects' in (U), as it has been pointed out in section I, I respectively mean *the quantifiers of the theory* and *the objects posited by the metaphysics of the theory*. Since STE's language is English, therefore, STE's quantifiers are natural language quantifiers.

[40] That 'S' is true can be inferred form our assumption (iii), i.e. the proposition that S is true, and
(K4.3) If the proposition that S is true, then 'S' is true.

[41] See Lambert (1965) and Lambert (1983, p.114-5).

[42] Lambert (1983, 112) writes: "Free logic, thus, does not imply nor should it be saddled with, any particular ontological inclination. So far as ontic proclivities are concerned free logic is truly free."

Chapter 3

[1] Many others, Tom Mc Kay (1981), Nathan Salmon (1986; 1989; 1990), Jonathan Berg (1988), Scott Soames (1995), Kirk Ludwig (1996), and Michael Thau (2002), have appealed to conversational implicatures to defend Neo-Russellianism against problems raised by co-referential names. Here, I do not address this issue. It is also worth mentioning that Scott Soames' earlier account (1995) should not be identified with his recent account (2002); while in the former Soames talks about descriptive contents being *pragmatically implicated*, in the latter he talks about descriptive contents being *asserted*. For more details see Soames (2002; 205-40).

[2] For some other presentations see Adams and Stecker (1994), Adams, Fuller, and Stecker (1997), and Taylor (2000).

[3] In the footnote, Adams and Dietrich add: "Please note that by 'lore' we will not mean that these descriptions must have been around a long time and be well known. So we depart a bit from the standard meaning of this term, but it is entrenched in earlier articles, so we continue to use the term. Others use 'file', 'profile', or 'dossier' – terms that do not have this connotation."

[4] In the footnote, Adams and Dietrich add: "For fiction, the association of descriptions and names may be by stipulation of the author, and by learning for the reader. And again, we are not talking about linguistic meaning or a type of meaning that all names might share (Recanati, 1993), but informational meaning contributed to a proposition expressed by an utterance on an occasion of use. We intend this reading throughout the paper."

[5] Atomic simple sentences are those atomic sentences that do not contain any 'that'-clauses.

[6] Depending on our view with regard to the existence predicate, what is semantically expressed by (15) or (16) would be represented differently. For example, it might be said that (15) and (16) semantically express the gappy propositions expressed by:
(15') There is something that is identical with Vulcan.
(16') There is nothing that is identical with Vulcan.
Furthermore, our view with regard to negation also affects this matter. Here I have followed Adams & Dietrich's view concerning the existence predicate and negation.

[7] Braun (1993; 2005), for example, does not accept this assumption.

[8] I have adjusted all sentence numbers throughout this chapter in accordance with my list of sentences.

[9] I have used 'nonexistence' as a negative predicate. There are other atomic simple sentences triggering the same kind of intuition concerning the completeness of the content that do not contain negative predicates. For instance, 'Watson is famous', 'I am thinking of Watson', etc. The choice of example is to the reader.

[10] Thanks to Ray Elugardo for raising this point.

[11] See Everett (2003; 21-25) for a similar criticism of the Pragmatic Explanation View.

[12] Using '*full names*' (names with referents) and '*referring names*' (names that refer) interchangeably may suggest that if a name has no referent, it does not refer. That the lack of referent makes the whole process of reference unsuccessful, to my view, is questionable. Here, however, I leave this issue aside.

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[13] The description associated to 'Sherlock Holmes' contains the expression 'fictional'. This may, or may not, raise further problems for the Pragmatic Explanation View. I leave aside such problems.

[14] In this section, I follow Everett (2003; 21-25).

[15] It can be argued that though Neo-Russellianism does not have any problem explaining our *intuition* concerning the modal profile of atomic simple sentences containing full names, the Pragmatic Explanation View turns this to be a problematic case. Consider a competent and rational speaker who associates the description 'the European man discovered America in 1492' with the name 'Christopher Columbus'. Call her 'Carol'. Carol assertively utters (19):

(19) If Christopher Columbus exists, Christopher Columbus discovered America in 1492.

Carol's utterance of (19), according to the Pragmatic Explanation View, pragmatically implicates the proposition expressed by:

(19') If the European man discovered America in 1492 exists, the European man discovered America in 1492 discovered America in 1942.

It seems that Carol, as many other competent and rational speakers, has the intuition that (19) is contingently true; given that Christopher Columbus exists, *someone else* might have discovered America or Christopher Columbus might have discovered America in a *different time*. Either case, (19) seems to be contingently true. (19'), however, seems to be necessarily true. But if the Pragmatic Explanation View were correct, then Carol should either mistake the modal profile of (19) with (19') – in the case she *completely* mistakes what is semantically expressed by (19) with what is pragmatically implicated by her utterance of (19) – or at least she should have some mixed intuitions about the modal profile of (19) – when she *does not completely* mistake them. However, it is not the case. It is also notable that this argument cannot be blocked by appeal to the logical form of (19) (recall that Adams and Dietrich replied to the Everett's argument from modal intuitions (§3.3.) by appeal to the logical form of identity sentences).

[16] It should be noted, however, that this argument does not assume that (26) is contradictory. This is important because one may argue that since (26) is not contradictory therefore there is no reason not to consider it as admissible. That (26) is not contradictory, in turn, might be justified as follows. Given that 'non' in 'is nonexistent' is not a sentential operator, the first part of (26), i.e. (24), is neither true nor false since it is an atomic simple sentence containing an empty name. The second part of (26), i.e. the negation of (24'), is false. Therefore, the whole sentence is neither true nor false. But, even in this case, (26) still does not seem admissible; it is after all neither true nor false.

[17] Grice (1967a, 1989, 31): "The presence of a conversational implicature must be capable of being worked out; for even if it can in fact be intuitively grasped, unless the intuition is replaceable by an argument, the implicature (if present at all) will not count as a conversational implicature."

[18] For an example of such a rule, see Adams and Fuller (2007; 460).

[19] I am grateful to Ray Elugardo for raising this objection.

Chapter 4

[1] Here, I have followed David Braun's criticism of Nathan Salmon's view. In particular, see Braun (2005, 620).

[2] See Priest (2005; 2007).

[3] Here I have followed Fine (1984).

[4] Assume (4), which contains both an English and a French proper name, is a legitimate sentence as (3).

[5] John Couch Adams, a British mathematician and astronomer, was a friend of Le Verrier, or assume so.

[6] See Zalta (1988, 18-22 and 230-44).

[7] See Zalta (1983, 158-9).

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